

EASTGATE

NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

SEPTEMBER 2001

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College Station. Embracing the Past, Exploring the Future.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This plan is the work of many residents who contributed through public participation processes and City staff who helped make the process work.

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Chapter

I

INTRODUCTION



Executive Summary

The Eastgate Neighborhood has played an important role in the history and growth of College Station. Years of aging and transition have created a unique character and charm, but have also given rise to a number of issues. The problems must be identified and the neighborhood's needs recognized. Residents have expressed their concerns through the neighborhood planning process in hopes that their recommendations will help provide a positive future for the neighborhood. This plan provides specific recommendations developed by a Citizen Planning Team and are the result of resident input, information analysis and long discussions. Residents believe that this plan and its recommendations are necessary to address identified concerns and preserve their quality of life. They recognize the important role that residents and property owners as well as the City have in addressing these issues. Implementation of these recommendations will help preserve the character and long term stability of the neighborhood.

Summary of Primary Resident Concerns

The following is a summary of the neighborhood's main concerns. The Citizen Planning Team identified these concerns through public participation processes and analysis. They were developed after lengthy discussions about neighborhood issues with each other and City officials. The following statements represent what residents view as the main issues and threats to their neighborhood.

- The closing of Central Fire Station has reduced the quality of emergency response in the area. Improving emergency response and coverage is a serious issue that needs more immediate attention from the City.
- Mosquitoes continue to be a health threat and significantly impact quality of life. The City needs to be more actively involved in helping develop solutions to this threat.
- On-street parking is a troubling issue and safety concern for residents in some areas. There is also concern about impacts on emergency response. Student housing is seen as a primary cause of the parking problem.
- Residents are greatly concerned about preserving the character of the neighborhood. Poor property maintenance, minimal code enforcement and an increasing number of rental properties contribute to appearance problems.
- Lack of sidewalks and bikeways make pedestrian mobility difficult and unsafe. Although the neighborhood is conveniently located close to many things, there is not safe access. There is special concern about pedestrian safety around College Hills Elementary.
- Speeding is seen as a serious safety issue in this area. There is a lack of speeding enforcement and awareness.
- Excessive non-neighborhood traffic is perceived to be a real problem. Some type of traffic calming is needed in some areas, but there is much concern about the process that would be used to design solutions. Residents are concerned that the whole Eastgate will not be included in studies and that residents will not be adequately involved in the solutions.
- Unregulated student housing is seen as the greatest threat to the long term stability of the neighborhood. If left unchecked, residents fear that the physical neighborhood

will begin to deteriorate more rapidly and increasing nuisance problems will continue to reduce quality of life and force out many homeowners.

- Unregulated infill development in and around the neighborhood will negatively impact visual character and create additional nuisances such as traffic and noise.
- The quality and amount of maintenance and landscaping in local parks has dropped significantly. Some non-neighborhood parks (sports fields) appear very well maintained compared to neighborhood parks.
- Lack of adequate resources will continue to cause deterioration of older parks and prevent needed maintenance and improvements. This will worsen as new parks continue to be developed in the community and added to the park system.
- Residents feel that they are not adequately involved in or notified of changes taking place in the neighborhood. Lack of organized neighborhood associations hampers residents' ability to be involved and effectively communicate with the City.
- Residents admit that they are not generally educated about local codes and services and are not aware of local issues, their causes and what they can do.

Purpose of Neighborhood Planning

The Eastgate planning project is a neighborhood-based effort to develop an action plan to address local issues. The purpose of the plan is to work with residents to identify issues of concern and devise strategies for addressing them. This project uses the combined efforts of residents, property owners, neighborhood groups and city departments to positively affect the area.

The Neighborhood Plan is used to:

- provide a framework for residents to identify issues and solutions,
- educate residents about the city's services and processes,
- educate the city about the neighborhood's concerns,
- initiate change rather than reacting to it,
- initiate and coordinate neighborhood improvement projects and activities,
- update the Comprehensive Plan.

The Eastgate planning project is conducted under the Neighborhood Services program of the City of College Station. More information about this program can be found on the City's web site: [//devservices.ci.college-station.tx.us/ neighborhood](http://devservices.ci.college-station.tx.us/neighborhood)

Relationship to the Comprehensive Plan

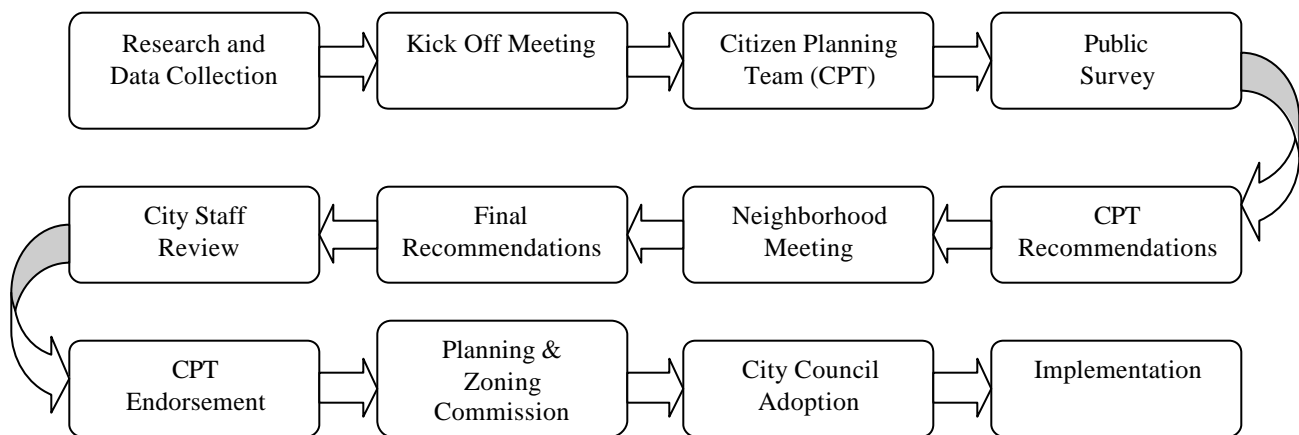
The College Station Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 1997 and provides broad policy direction that guides growth and future decision making. The Comprehensive Plan is typically implemented through development regulations, ordinances and capital improvement programs. It is generally long-term oriented and may not address all of the immediate concerns of an area. This is the purpose of the neighborhood plan, identifying

specific issues and detailing action oriented solutions. A list of related Comprehensive Plan goals and objectives can be found in **Appendix 3**.

Planning Process

The neighborhood planning process is dependent on input and participation from citizens. The process included a number of public meetings, a citizen planning team, surveys and city staff input. In all more than 1000 citizen hours went into the creation of this neighborhood plan.

Eastgate Area Planning Process



The Eastgate project kicked off in January 2001 with two large public meetings. More than 180 residents and property owners attended. Through small group processes they were asked to identify things that they liked and did not like in their neighborhoods. The results of this meeting were published and distributed to residents as a report of initial findings.



After the Eastgate kick-off meetings, a Citizen Planning Team was formed with volunteers from the area to work on the plan. This group of 17 residents met over a two month period to frame the issues, create objectives and develop action recommendations. They completed a



final review and recommendation of the plan. Much of the final plan is a result of the hard work of these citizens.

A mail out survey was sent to 2143 residents and property owners. More than 500 responses were received for an outstanding 24% return rate. The results of this survey can be found in **Appendix 1**.

After draft Recommendations were created, a public neighborhood meeting was held to get resident input before the final product was compiled. The neighborhood meeting was held in May and more than 150 residents attended. A written comment sheet was collected to get citizen input. The results are in **Appendix 2**.

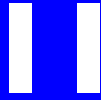
The City Departments were represented through the Neighborhood Service Team. The NST provided technical guidance and expertise to the Citizen Planning Team throughout the process and performed a final technical review of the plan.



Organization of the Plan

This planning document has four major chapters that describe the Eastgate Area, the planning process and its results. Chapter II is a description of the Eastgate Area. It includes a physical and demographic overview of the neighborhood. Chapter III contains the plan components and recommendations. These are the specific actions that were developed to address the concerns and issues identified. Chapter IV is an action chart that details which organizations will be responsible for implementing the action steps and a timeline for doing so. Finally, the appendices include results from the surveys.

Chapter

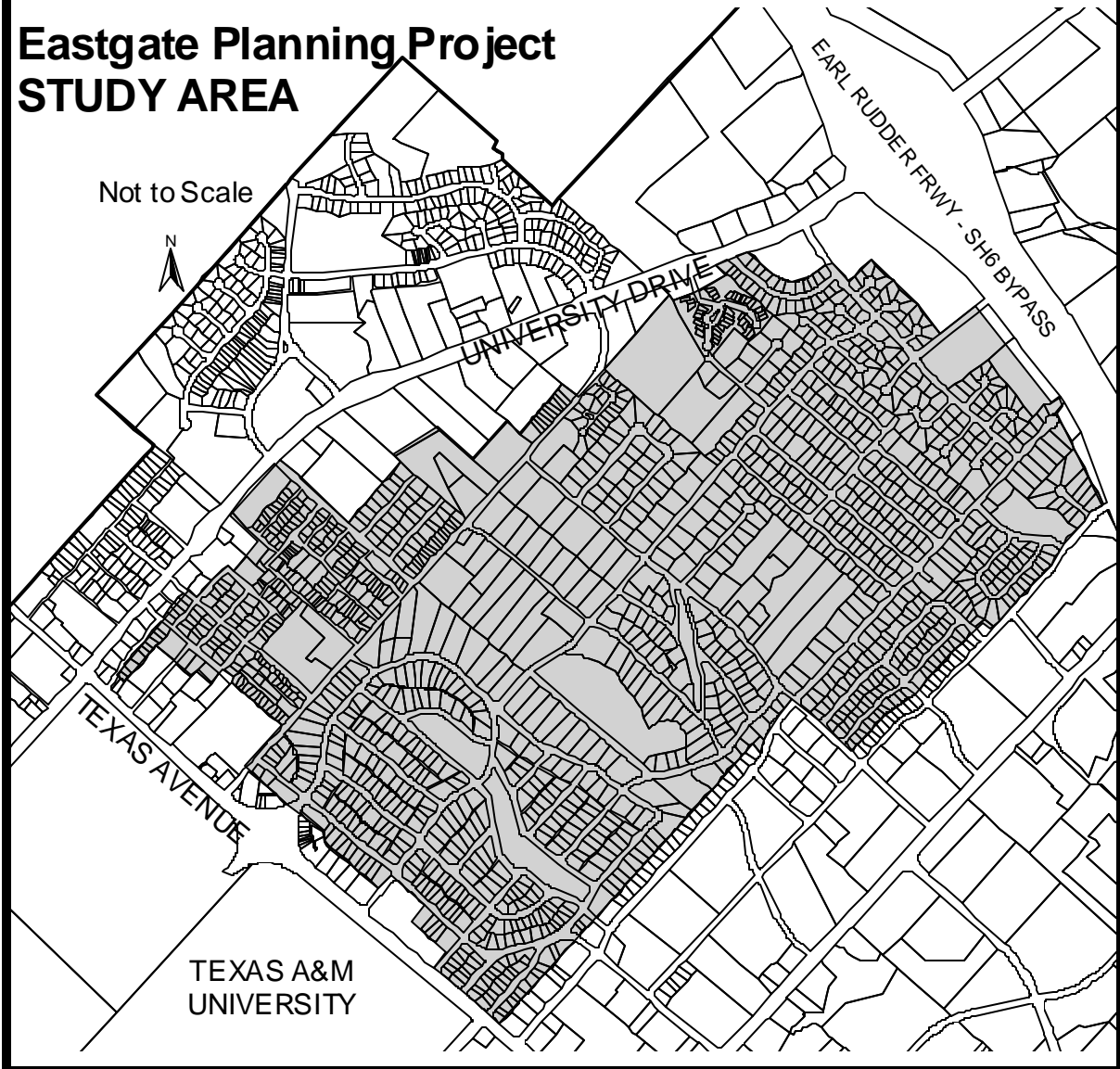


EASTGATE NEIGHBORHOOD DESCRIPTION



Eastgate Planning Project STUDY AREA

Not to Scale



The Eastgate planning area consists mainly of single family homes and is surrounded by duplexes, apartment buildings and commercial property located between Texas A&M University and Highway 6 in College Station, Texas. The planning area is adjacent to Highway 6 and Scott & White Hospital to the Northeast, duplexes and apartments to the southeast, commercial, office space and municipal property to the southwest, and commercial, office space and vacant land to the northwest.



History

The Eastgate planning area is the site of the Richard Carter Homestead. Carter was College Station's earliest settler arriving in 1831 and his original land grant covered most of what is College Station today. Growth in the College Hills area did not begin until 1938 when John C. Culpepper Sr. developed the College Hills Estates subdivision. When the area was developed it was nicknamed the "Deans and Presidents area" because the street names were those of current or popular deans and presidents of Texas A&M University. This area was developed as a family neighborhood that was intended to grow away from the University. Today the neighborhood is considered close to campus in relation to newer developments.



Land Use

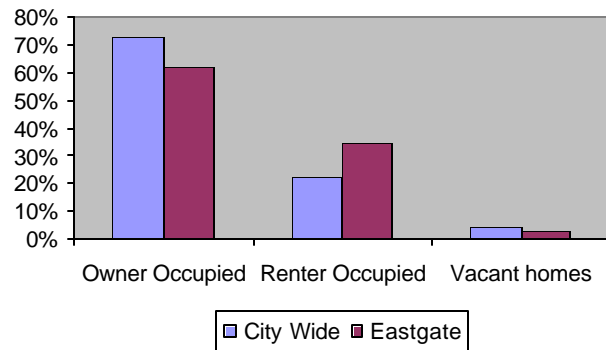
The Eastgate planning area includes 728 acres of land, 3.1% of the total area of College Station. The dominant land use is residential, with over 65% of the area identified as single family homes. The area includes the following uses:

- 476.2 acres of single family homes
- 13.5 acres of multifamily homes including two apartment complexes, Eastgate Apartments and Lincoln Square Apartments
- 5.4 acres of duplexes
- 33.0 acres of park land including 5 neighborhood parks and 1 community park
- 14.8 acres of school property, College Hills Elementary school
- 54.9 acres of vacant land
- 1.4 acres of general retail
- 1.6 acres of religious institutions
- 0.2 acres of office use
- 127.0 acres of public R.O.W. and 18.8 miles of paved public streets.

Housing

Eastgate has approximately 3,752 residents occupying 1,152 single-family and 452 multifamily dwellings. The Eastgate population is 5.5% of the city's population, but the number of single family homes in the area is 13.9% of the total number of homes in College Station. There are two registered Neighborhood Associations in the area: College Hills Estates and College Hills Woodlands.

Eastgate Single-Family Housing



Because of its proximity to Texas A&M University, Eastgate has experienced an increase in the number of student renters in the area. When Eastgate was developed it was intended to be a single-family neighborhood, but the amount of renter occupied single-family homes is now over 35%.

Building Conditions

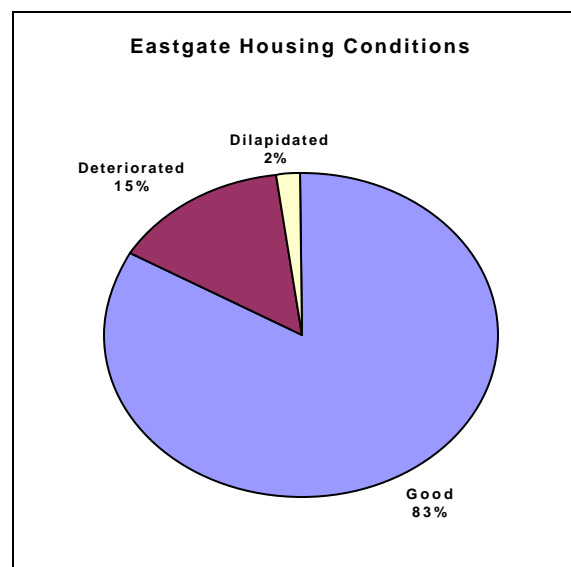
There have been numerous Community Development projects in the Eastgate area over the past few years. Currently there are six projects in progress. Two of the current projects fall under the Owner Relocation program that involves demolition and reconstruction of current dwellings that are too dilapidated for rehabilitation. There is one Downpayment Assistance project underway to help a first-time buyer with the downpayment and closing costs of buying a home. There are two housing rehabilitations started in the Eastgate area. There is also a sidewalk project being built in the north side of the planning area. The majority of the Community Development projects have taken place on the north side of the Eastgate area.

A housing quality survey of the Eastgate area was conducted in 1995 by HOK as part of the City of College Station's Comprehensive Plan. The findings for the area were as follows:

Good- in satisfactory or better condition with no visible evidence of physical or cosmetic problems

Deteriorating- visually in need of structural and/or cosmetic repairs and may not be in compliance with the existing City codes. A "deteriorating" dwelling unit exhibits roof damage, foundation cracks, damage to structural elements, damage to permanent improvements (driveways, patios, siding, etc.) extensive peeling paint, neglected/overgrown landscaping, or similar problem.

Dilapidated- visibly severe structural problems that threaten the health and safety of occupants, and warrant condemnation or removal. "Dilapidated" structures require extensive repairs and rebuilding which may exceed the structures market value.



Neighborhood Safety

The highest number of calls for assistance in the area in 1999 were for animal control, which is also the highest call city wide. Traffic safety is a concern in the neighborhood with over 67% of all calls for traffic patrol in College Station coming from the Eastgate neighborhood. The following table shows the calls for police service ranked by number of calls.

Calls for Police Service in 1999			
	Eastgate (3632 calls)	College Station (56,781 calls)	% of City's calls in Eastgate
Animal Control	463	3946	11.7%
Community/Neighborhood Contact	216	3154	6.8%
Close Patrol	204	3565	5.7%
Public Assist	198	3292	6.0%
Alarm	168	2507	6.7%
Loud Party/Music	163	2734	6.0%
Suspicious Person/Vehicle	160	3384	4.7%
911 Calls	156	1892	8.2%
Directed patrol	112	527	21.3%
Follow up/Supplemental info	109	2527	4.3%
Assist Motorist	105	2140	4.9%
Directed Traffic Patrol	92	137	67.2%
Theft	84	1628	5.2%
Minor Accident	81	1526	5.3%
Public Disturbance	79	827	9.6%
Attempt Warrant Service	74	1610	4.6%
Agency Assist	71	1108	6.4%
Parking Complaint	68	973	7.0%
Criminal Mischief	53	774	6.8%
Burglary of Vehicle	49	670	7.3%
Animal Bite*	26	106	24.5%*
Abandon/Junk Vehicle*	18	104	17.3%*
* not in top 20 complaints for the area, but over 10% of total complaints in College Station			

Close patrol - If an area is having some type of problem, i.e. thefts, patrol is stepped up in that area.

Public Assist - These are not always crime related. It could be a question from a citizen or it could be stopping by an elderly person's home to say "hi". All the officer's time must be accounted for.

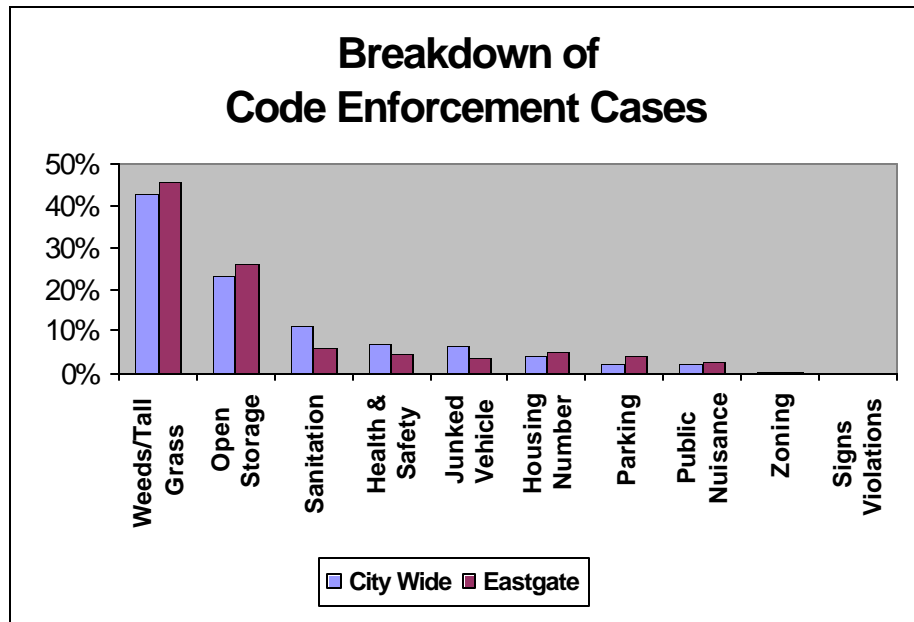
Agency Assist - Assist another agency, Child Protective Service, Fire etc.

Follow Up Supplemental Info - Investigating a crime that has already been reported.

Directed Patrol - Similar to Close Patrol but the officers are told by their supervisor the area they must patrol.

Neighborhood or Community Contact - Also known as walk and talk. The officers get out and mingle with the people in a particular area.

Code Enforcement



Code enforcement is an ongoing service for all residents in College Station. The code violations reported in Eastgate are similar to those reported for other neighborhoods with the most common violations being tall grass and weeds and open storage. Parking violations in Eastgate comprise 30% of all parking violations in the City, which is typical in the older neighborhoods. In all about 15% of the City's code enforcement cases occurred in the Eastgate area. Approximately 75% of all code violation cases are based on complaints made by individuals.

% of City Code Violations in Eastgate Area			
	Eastgate	College Station	% of Violations in Eastgate Area
Weeds/Tall Grass	401	2513	16.0%
Open Storage	230	1325	17.4%
Sanitation	53	654	8.1%
Health and Safety	44	403	10.9%
Junked Vehicles	33	377	8.8%
Housing Number	47	254	18.5%
Parking	37	123	30.1%
Public Nuisance	22	118	18.6%
Zoning	7	43	16.3%
Signs Violations	0	8	0%

Neighborhood Improvement Projects

Eastgate is currently undergoing numerous improvements including thoroughfare and residential rehabilitation for street repairs, new playgrounds in park areas, and utility line rehabilitation. Many more repairs and improvements are planned for the coming years. Recent and Planned Improvements for the Eastgate Area are listed below:

Recent Public Improvements

- 1997- Bike loop and trails installed in Thomas Park
- 1998- Thoroughfare rehabilitation on Foster
Utility rehabilitation on Ave. A and Nimitz
Added new area lights in Richard Carter Park
- 1999- Replaced light poles and fixtures in Thomas Park
- 2000- Thoroughfare rehabilitation on Munson and Rose Circle
Eastgate Rehabilitation Phase II & III**
Rebuilt basketball courts in Thomas Park
New playground in Thomas Park, Lions Park and Merry Oaks Park
New sidewalks and sign in Eastgate Park
Rebuilding electric lines behind Best Buy from Lincoln to Poplar

Planned Public Improvements

- 2001- Thoroughfare rehabilitation on Francis, George Bush East, and Walton
Eastgate Rehabilitation Phase IV**
Rebuilding electric lines behind Chili's and Acme Glass from Francis to Lincoln
Begin the installation of the Eastgate Historic Lighting
- 2002- Thoroughfare rehabilitation on Dominik
Residential rehabilitation on Athens, Gilchrist, Harrington, Kyle, Milner, Moss, and Nunn
Sealcoat resurfacing on Brazoswood
Eastgate Rehabilitation Phase V**
- 2003- Thoroughfare rehabilitation on Merry Oaks
Eastgate rehabilitation Phase VI**
- 2005 Sealcoat resurfacing for most of the College Hills area.
- 200?- New concrete walks and lights in Merry Oaks Park

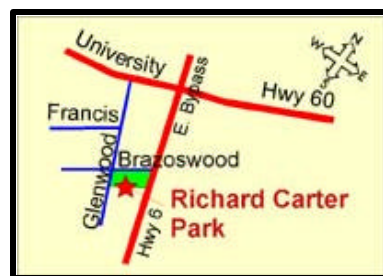
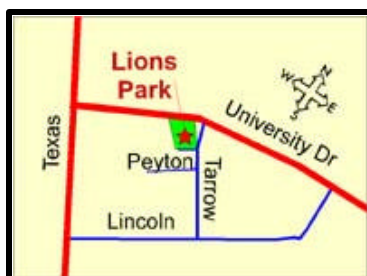
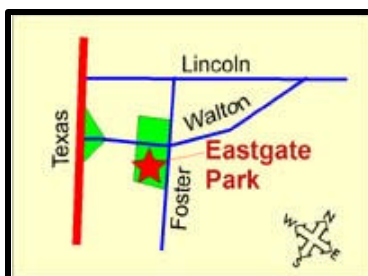
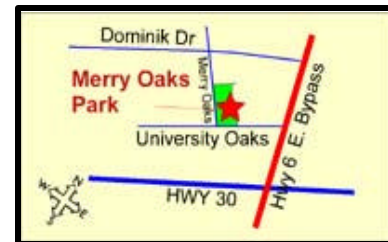
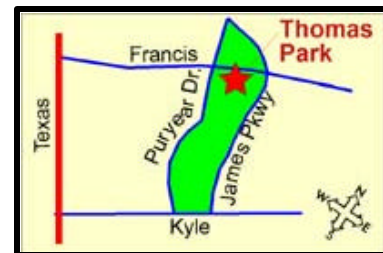
** The Eastgate Rehabilitation Projects include replacing and redirecting water and sewer lines.

Neighborhood Parks

There are six parks covering over 33 acres that serve the Eastgate neighborhood. Among these six parks are two of College Station's oldest parks, Thomas Park and Eastgate Park dedicated in 1938, and the only historically significant park in College Station, Richard Carter Park. Eastgate Park serves as a gateway into the neighborhood and has been left undeveloped. The Richard Carter Park was developed as an official Texas Sesquicentennial Project, and includes an interpretive center, a discovery garden, and a historical marker. Lions Park, Merry Oaks Park, Parkway Park, and Thomas Park all include open play areas, playgrounds and picnic areas.

Recent Park Improvements

- 2 Lions Park - 1994 sidewalks, drinking fountains, play equipment. 1999 playground replacement.
- 2 Thomas Park - 2000 new basketball courts, playground replacement, area lights.
- 2 Eastgate Park - 1999 sidewalks, planter, sign, landscaping.
- 2 Parkway Park - 1991 playground, picnic unit, sign, drinking fountain.
- 2 Merry Oaks Park - new playground, area lights, concrete walks (planned).



Chapter



INITIAL PUBLIC COMMENTS



Citizen Comments

The first goal of this project was to get information about the area from the residents. During initial meetings citizens were asked to respond to three questions about their neighborhood. They were asked to write the answers to these questions on forms provided, and then each group discussed the answers. The following lists are the results from this process.

What do you like about living in your neighborhood?

Convenience (listed 87 times)
 Central location, close to City Hall, the mall, TAMU, hospital, etc.
 Numerous old, large trees (64)
 Quiet, safe neighborhood, low crime (54)
 Good, close parks and recreation facilities (51)
 Unique character (45)
 Older homes, variety of architectural styles, larger private lots
 Established, diverse neighborhoods, (40)
 Multi-generational, Heterogeneous, ethnic mix, socio-economic mix
 Good, Friendly neighbors (32)
 Great, close Elementary School (28)
 Good City services, (16)
 Police patrols, responsiveness, trash picked up regularly, clean Streets
 Little Traffic (14)
 Limited thoroughfares, winding streets, limited drive through traffic, lack of traffic lights, cul-de-sacs
 Good Access to major streets (11)
 Texas, University, Bypass
 Clean and neat (13)
 Lawns, no trash, home maintenance
 Beautiful area, pools, parks, woods, trees (9)
 Pride in neighborhood and homes (8)
 Remodeling and renovation, neighbor-

“Normally a quiet & pleasant place to live with close proximity to A&M, shopping and other services.”

hood integrity
 Sense of place, neighborhood, and home (7)
 Family atmosphere, good place for family (7)
 Historic Value, people that know the history (6)
 Not crowded (5)
 Space between Houses, country atmosphere, secluded feeling
 Sidewalks (5)
 Wide streets, good streets (4)
 Large yards (3)
 People want to live here (3)
 Blend of older and newer homes (3)
 Good place for students (3)
 Development and economic potential (3)
 Cheap Housing, low property taxes (3)
 Good street lighting (3)
 Good retirement community (2)
 My House (2)
 No sidewalks (2)
 Mostly owner occupied (2)
 Access to areas to walk
 No street lights
 Oaks Creek stays in its banks
 Trees kept clear of power lines
 No parking on Foster
 No Apartments
 Parking on the streets, Special events parking
 Room for improvement in existing housing
 Not overly crowded
 Income and equity appreciation on property
 Luminaries on Walton on Christmas
 Well-kept property retains its value

“Established neighborhood with diversity of housing styles and people.”

What specific issues impact your neighborhood?

Traffic (listed 75 times)

Drive-through traffic, across from Merry Oaks Park, around school, do not open Williams, cars from University, Munson, Puryear, Foster, Gilchrist, Lincoln, George Bush East, Glenhaven, running stop signs, need more, need light at University and Forest drive, Francis & Merry Oaks & Westover

Rental property (48)

High number of rentals, too many in one home, students are a nuisance, absentee Landlords, mixed in with single family, poor maintenance, noisy, vacant houses, should be limited

Speeders (41)

Post more signs, Kyle, Westover, Glenhaven, Puryear, Munson, Thomas Park- needs to be lower, Dominik, Francis, Walton, Lack of enforcement

Lack of sidewalks on busy streets (28)

Dominik, Walton, Francis, Need on both sides of every street

Students (27)

Too many in one house, don't follow rules, multiple cars

On street parking (27)

Concern for Fire truck access, Milner, Neighbors should share parking, On Puryear between Walton and James Parkway, Students, Francis, RVs and rigs, Parking in bike lanes, Double parking on corner of Harrington and Walton

Street quality (23)

Need "dips" removed, Street improvement would increase traffic, Torn up-resurfacing, Some not wide enough for garbage trucks, Francis

Noise (23)

Parties, loud music, loud car stereos (no

violation enforcement), from apartments, from Bypass, barking dogs

Development concerns (14)

Improvements and redevelopment must be encouraged, NIMBY development philosophy, need quality, long-lasting, energy efficient housing, University Dr commercial-noise, smell, in fill along Lincoln, commercial around neighborhood causing through traffic, 60 yr. old restrictions inadequate for future growth, possible encroachment of commercial from Texas Ave. to Foster, Desire for many to develop large lots

Drainage (8)

Thomas Park, 1014 Francis, street and sidewalk in water, from new construction, on Francis between Munson and Westover, On Munson toward Francis

Trash (11)

Junk in yards waiting for pick up, clutter in yards, party trash

“Increasing number of rental property changes character of the neighborhood.”

Need lighting (7)

Street corners, Ashburn, Thomas Park, not period lights though, light out at Lincoln and Munson frequently, 305 Walton dark

Infrastructure quality (6)

Water, sewer, new sewer mains-construction, parks

Subdivided lots (6)

Fear of future, building new homes

Aging structures and deterioration (7)

Facilities: parks and school

Poorly maintained homes and yards (7)

Need to be razed around Tarrow

Open storage (6)

Weeds and Tall grass (6)

Dominik, further down Walton
 Bike lanes needed (5)
 Unleashed animals (5)
 Deed Restrictions (4)
 Not enforced
 Stray cats (4)
 Code Enforcement (4)
 Controversial Zoning and Zoning Changes (3)
 Poplar, first block
 Population increases in College Station (3)
 Restrictions (3)
 Subdivision, zoning, regulations being
 changed by city after development
 Number of homes that will qualify for historical
 markers soon (2)
 Driving and parking on Lawns (2)
 Proximity to A&M (2)
 Junked vehicles (2)

“Increasing traffic &
 widespread disregard for
 speed limits & other
 traffic laws.”

~~Responsibilities of dogs using other peoples
 lawns~~

Community Preservation
 Historic Preservation
 No bus service to the elementary school
 Re-open fire station on Texas
 Shouldn't restrict students in area
 Dumpster pickup at six AM
 Increased property tax
 Lack of acknowledgement of value of older
 neighborhoods by city staff and Council
 City keeping up easement, Glenhaven sidewalks
 behind home fences

“Poor maintenance of
 rental properties
 and homes.”

Vandalism (Mailboxes) (2)
 Multifamily development (2)
 Power outages (2)
 Mosquitoes (2)
 Redesign of George Bush / Kyle (2)
 Shifting Earth, slab damage
 Do not want sidewalks
 Residents
 Transition from older homeowners
 Low Density Housing
 Park curfews need to be enforced
 Trees dying without replacement
 On glide path to Easterwood Airport
 School zone lights
 Not following zoning
 Possibility of losing green space
 Zoning and growth



What could be done to make your neighborhood a better place?

Traffic calming (listed 35 times)

Speed bumps on Dominik, Francis, Glenhaven, keep Williams closed, Narrow streets and add curves, improve signage, 4-way stop on Francis and Walton (7), enforce stop signs, Stop sign at Brazoswood and Glenhaven, Cut through on Munson, close streets, Glenhaven, Francis, Dominik, Munson, Harvey, automated systems for increased traffic controls

Sidewalks (24)

Wide and along curb, all streets, both sides, Dominik, Francis, Walton, Ashburn, make a more conducive walking environment, towards shops and businesses, around the school, Kyle Ave.

Control rental property (21)

Registration and annual inspection, to insure landlords are involved, make maximum 3 unrelated persons, limit number per household, families or 2 unrelated only, monitored closely after first police visit, contracts with renters

Park improvements (20)

Recreational Basketball and Volleyball league, Eastgate Park beautification, landscape, flowers in Carter Park, more parking at Thomas Park, exercise stations added in Park on Merry Oaks, lighting on b-ball courts at Thomas Park, bathroom at Thomas Park, Parkway Park, Kawani's nature trail and Thomas Park better maintained, water grass at Thomas Park, exchange Eastgate Park for a larger area, nature trail needs to be widened, softer and wheel-

chair friendly and bridges need to be rebuilt, label trees on nature path

Reduce on street parking (19)

Keep out of bike lanes, resident parking permits, require visitors permit, 2 hour parking limit, Nimitz, Lincoln Square Apts, none overnight, none after 1 a.m., no parking in alleyways

Street repair (16)

Dips at Ashburn and Gilchrist, of private roads and alleys (not just funds), curb and gutter south end of Thomas Park, Dominik, widen Nimitz (parked cars impede traffic), entirely redo Francis and Munson, repave roads, Stop vegetation intrusion, "dips" on Nimitz, install curbs and gutters along Ash, Nimitz, Poplar, Live Oak, etc. (College Vista), slump in street and sidewalk on Francis

Enforce and post existing codes (16)

Educate public on codes, parking in yard (6), tall grass and weed (5), sanitation / trash (3), junk cars (2)

Reduce through traffic (did not necessarily mention traffic calming) (13)

By improving feeder road from University to Harvey, on Munson by making Glenhaven cut through from Lowe's to Harvey, from University and Harvey

"More attention to
preserving and enhancing
greenspaces and
maintaining vegetation."

Lighting (13)

Add historic lighting, corner of Kyle and Puryear, 305 Walton, Thomas Park, towards shops and businesses, but not too much, low impact, reduce light pol-

lution in sky
 Control speed limit (did not necessarily mention traffic calming) (17)
 Francis, Lincoln, Kyle and Puryear,
 Lower, reduce around Thomas Park from 30 to 20 mph, increase police visibility.
 Increase sense of community integrity, identity and place (10)
 Through restrictions, community center/teen center, capitalize on walking
 Home and yard maintenance (10)
 Control multi-family upkeep, paint homes when needed, help with tree trimming when needed, enforce codes related to building maintenance
 Reduce the number of rentals (9)
 Encourage rentals to sell to families, reduce students, encourage owner occupied by a rental property tax
 Single family only (8)
 Enforce Single family zoned areas, no more apts or duplexes, do not allow students.
 Reduce sign pollution (8)

“Find some acceptable mechanism for traffic calming.”

Munson, Dominik, Walton, Neon signs in student window
 Rewards for improving property, home beautification (7)
 Tax incentives for rehabilitation (CS building requirements make fixing up expensive), By unified gateway
Enforce codes
 Reduce noise (8)
 Build sound wall on East Bypass at residential property, from car stereos, Glass Pak mufflers, stop dog barking
 Quicker response to disturbance calls (5)

Party Police on heavy student weekends
 Put all utilities underground (5)
 Control development (5)
 Stop encroachment of businesses from University and Harvey, prohibit zoning changes to commercial and multifamily, on University Dr.
 Higher building standards (8)
 Require more parking be provided, setback restrictions on homes and duplexes, require more/wider driveways.

“Encourage better house maintenance.”

More active neighborhood associations (4)
 Encourage students to attend
 Bikelanes (4)
 Dominik, Francis, Ashburn, Walton
 Do not allow subdivision of lots (4)
 Preserve and enhance greenspace and vegetation (3)
 Native plants and trees, replace trees
 Better drainage (4)
 Sidewalks flood
 To reduce mosquitoes
 Educate homeowners/landlords on being a better neighbor (2)
 Crossing guard (2)
 On Munson and Dominik
 Beautification projects with groups (2)
 Landscaped gateways (2)
 Enhance historical value, historic preservation (2) Lighting and paths
 Densification of the neighborhood (2)
 Bus service provided to school
 Respond to legitimate suggestions for improvement
 Eliminate dwellings that have outlived their original function and design
 Maintain public facilities
 Develop vacant lots
 Reduce damage to street signs, stop and dip



Encourage streetscape
 Protect modest homes
 File all vacant homes for sale
 Younger neighbors
 Only responsible homeowners
 Cure NIMBY syndrome
 More active neighborhood to control student activity
 Repair old utilities
 Get the small businesses
 Make clear that this neighborhood is not for students
 Encourage upscale (150,000+) town homes, patio homes, and garden homes
 Lawns should be returned to native prairie grass and not cut
 Cut underbrush near creeks
 Rebuild the entire neighborhood
 Replat subdivision
 Remove all concrete drives
 Rewrite subdivision regulations
 Adopt BEPS
 Prohibit remodeling without BEPS (building energy performance standards)
 Establish neighborhood watch
 Create city ordinance to limit number of cars per residence
 Cite property owners, not renters, for code violations
 Implement volunteer program for litter pick up
 Add reflective stripes and house numbers to all curbs
 Remove vegetation from visibility triangle
 Clarify signs at Walton and Francis
 More neighborhood meetings and social events
 Brick house on Nimitz needs to be moved fur-

“We homeowners have pride in our yards and homes and we want to keep it that way. Parties are not that much of a bother but it’s the trash, parking and lack of care for rental properties.”

ther back from the street

Identify all 2-way stops
 Expanded Recycling program to include more plastics
 Lower street signs so they reflect in headlights
 Hydrants fixed at Francis, Gilchrist, Ashburn
 Keep pool open longer, April to October
 Each street should decide if they want sidewalks and bike lanes



Citizen Planning Team Priorities

Using the information gathered at the public meetings the Citizen Planning Team identified and ranked the primary issues in the area. The table to the right is a list of the ranked issues →



Rank Issue

- 1 Traffic
- 1 Rental Housing
- 3 Non-single-family development
- 4 Speeding
- 5 Neighborhood Parking
- 6 New Sidewalks
- 6 Redevelopment
- 8 Property Maintenance
- 9 Code Enforcement
- 9 Subdivision of large lots
- 11 Street and Sidewalk repairs
- 12 Park Improvements
- 13 Drainage issues
- 13 Neighborhood Appearance
- 15 New Bikelanes
- 15 Public infrastructure
- 17 Deed restrictions
- 18 New Fire Station
- 18 Nuisance / Behavior issues
- 20 Street Lighting
- 20 New houses on vacant lots
- 22 Neighborhood Associations
- 22 Historic Preservation
- 24 Curb and Gutter
- 25 Neighborhood Entrances
- 26 Animal Control

Chapter

IV

NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN AND RECOMMENDATIONS



IMPROVING OUR PARKS

“Track, grass, etc. at Merry Oaks Park needs more frequent maintenance.”

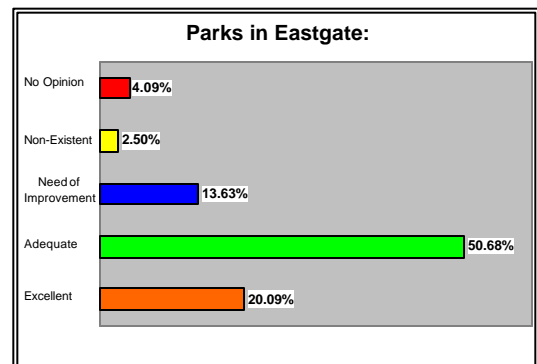
“We have nice large parks conveniently located in our neighborhood.”

“The park is not maintained. If you’re going to do a flower garden, then maintain it!”

-- *Quotes taken from citizen survey* --



Thomas Park



Mail survey response



Richard Carter Park



Thomas Park

Summary

The Eastgate area has six public parks covering 33 acres. These parks have many purposes and meet a variety of needs from the historic Richard Carter Park to the always busy Thomas Park and Pool. These parks help define the character of the Eastgate area and are an important asset to residents. According to the College Station Recreation, Park and Open Space Master Plan, this area has a shortage of parkland. Because most of the land in this area is developed, there is little room for new parkland and there is also a lack of parkland dedication funds available for park improvements. Continued infill development will likely increase the use of these parks over time.

In the residential mail survey 29% rated parks as excellent and 50% rated them as adequate. Resident comments relayed an overall satisfaction with the parks in the area; and a handful of improvements implemented over the last ten years have been helpful. However, there were some specific issues related to the long term safety and maintenance of neighborhood parks. Other suggestions included park improvements to make the parks more usable. Overall the Citizen Planning Team believes that the City needs to ensure that enough resources are being allocated to the maintenance and improvement of all City parks with a specific emphasis on older neighborhood parks.

Recommendation 1:

Richard Carter Park Improvements

Make repairs and improvements to Carter Park including addition of a playground and jogging trail. Carter Park is developed as a historical site, but does not have recreational facilities. Residents living in the Glenhaven area would benefit from the addition of facilities including a shaded playground, benches and jogging track. In addition, the current facilities are in disrepair. Funding would come from future bonds or parkland dedications.



Richard Carter Park

Recommendation 2: Shade Structures

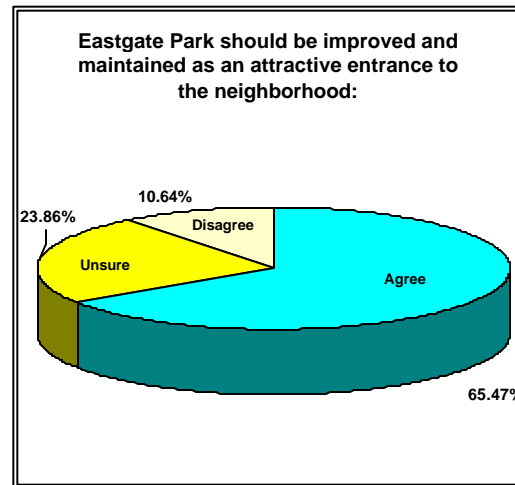
The City shall construct shade structures over playgrounds at Thomas and Merry Oaks Parks. During the summer months the playground equipment is not shaded and is often too hot to play on. Shade structures allow more use of the facility and protects users. Funding would come from future bonds or park land dedications.



Playground at Thomas Park

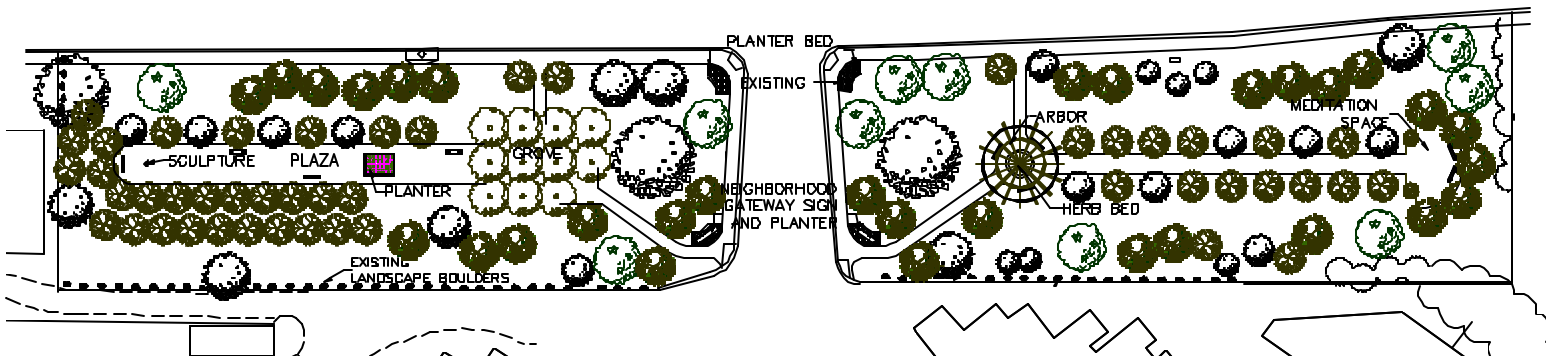
Recommendation 3: Eastgate Park

Make improvements to Eastgate Park, emphasizing passive recreational activities. Eastgate Park is small, only 1.8 acres, and has remained mostly unimproved. Sixty-five percent of residents stated that the park should be improved while only sixteen percent favored selling the parkland. During the public meeting residents were asked to choose one of four options presented for the park. The passive park design was most favored. Funding would come from future bonds or parkland dedications.



Mail survey response

Below is a conceptual passive design for Eastgate Park:



Recommendation 4: Thomas Park Jogging Track

Improve the jogging trail surface at Thomas Park. Part of the jogging track is a gravel surface that is difficult for some users including those pushing strollers and kids riding bikes. Joggers have also complained about getting rocks in their shoes. Funding would come from future bonds or parkland dedications.



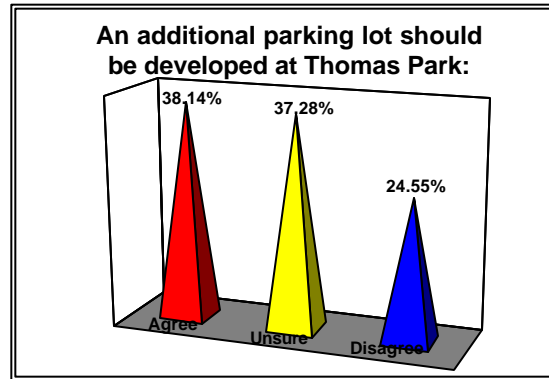
Jogging track at Thomas Park

Recommendation 5: Parking at Thomas Park

The City needs to consider improving and increasing on-street parking at Thomas Park. During busy times at the swimming pool there is limited parking at the park. There are a few places adjacent to the park where on-street parking might be improved. A new off-street parking lot is not a desirable option. Funding would come from future bonds or parkland dedications.



Parking at Thomas Pool



Mail survey response

Recommendation 6: Thomas Pool

Support proposed improvements to Thomas Pool. The Parks Department currently has some plans to make improvements to Thomas Pool. Those improvements are needed and should be implemented.



Thomas Pool



Recommendation 7: Park Maintenance, Landscaping and Tree Replacement

Support proposed landscape / tree replacement program and dedicate more resources to the maintenance of neighborhood parks. The Parks Department is developing a proposal for a program that would focus on landscape maintenance and replacing trees in parks. This program is needed to ensure our parks remain attractive and enjoyable places. In addition, adequate resources need to be made available for ongoing maintenance of park facilities and equipment.

Recommendation 8: Lions Park Basketball Court

The City should improve and expand the basketball court at Lions Park. Currently there is a half-court facility at the park. This receives a lot of use and expansion of the court would allow additional use of the facility and park. This park may be eligible for Community Development Block Grant funding.



Basketball court at Lions Park

Recommendation 9: Lions Park Expansion

Expand Lions Park into the adjacent City owned property (former water tank). When the City redevelops the property on the corner of Tarrow and University, expansion of Lions Park should be included. The expansion is needed to better serve the adjacent residential area. Some funding may be available through Community Development Block Grants. The City Council has recently supported a TEA-21 grant application for the construction of a new Chamber of Commerce facility. It is recommended that this new development include expansion of the park as much as possible.

Recommendation: 10 Parkway Park boundaries

Erect markers to better define the boundaries of Parkway Park. It is not clear what land in the area is part of the park.

Recommendation 11: Park Benches

Most of the parks in the area need more benches. There is not adequate seating, especially next to playgrounds and other places where parents may be watching children. The City should pursue a memorial bench program, where citizens can “purchase” park benches in honor of individuals.

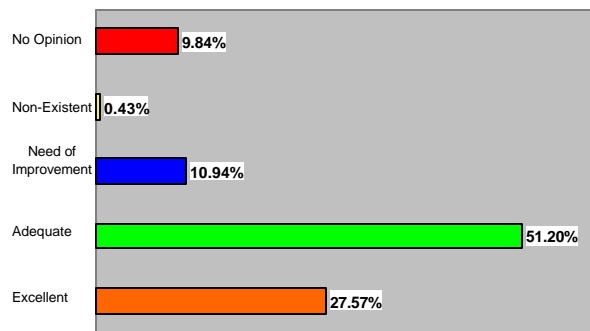
Priority of Park Improvements

Residents were asked to prioritize recommended park improvements at the public meeting, this table shows the results:

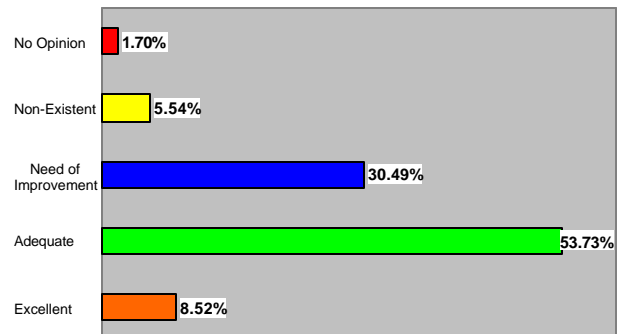
1	Install shade structures for playgrounds
2	Improve parking at Thomas Park
3	Repair and improve Richard Carter Park
4	Fund better maintenance, landscaping and tree replacement
5	Improve basketball court at Lions Park
6	Improve Thomas Park jogging trail
7	Support improvements to Thomas Pool

PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY

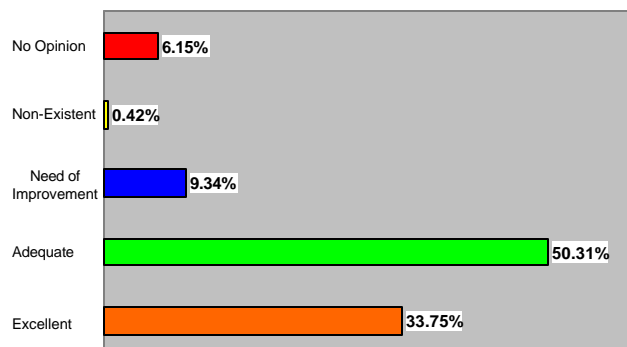
Fire Protection in Eastgate



Street lighting in Eastgate:



Police Service in Eastgate:



Summary

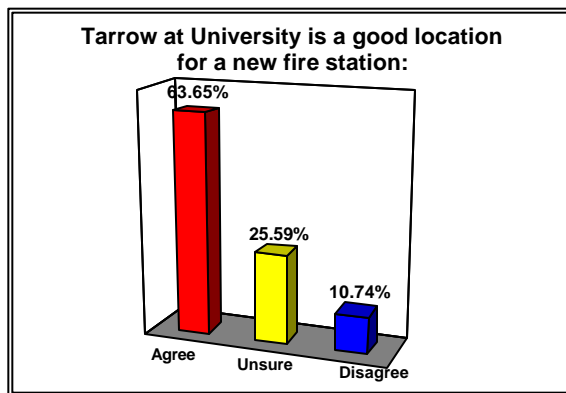
Emergency response is a very important service for Eastgate area residents. It influences the perceived quality of life, especially when you consider that 37% of the residents are over age 55 or older according to the mail survey. Currently the Eastgate area receives primary EMS response from the fire station located on Holleman Drive. Previous street closing issues in the area highlighted the concern for emergency service to the area. When asked what was most needed near the neighborhood, the top answer was a fire station, followed closely by parks / open space. However a majority of residents also stated that fire protection was excellent or adequate. Residents overwhelmingly supported the concept of placing a fire station on the corner of Tarrow and University Dr. Crime does not appear to be major concern for most residents with 83% of respondents rating police service excellent or adequate.

Street lighting also plays an important role in the character of the area and making a neighborhood feel safe. Some residents like the atmosphere created by minimal lighting, while others feel that increased lighting is needed in some areas. The City has had a policy of working with local residents to determine if there is a desire for more lighting in specific places.

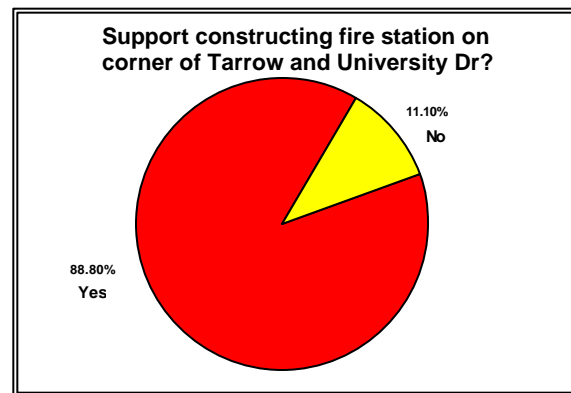
Mosquitoes are a health concern for many residents in the area, especially those located near creeks. The nuisance created by these flying pests can also greatly diminish quality of life and at times make it difficult to go outdoors. The City stopped spraying (fogging) for mosquitoes a few years ago and relies on advice from experts at Texas A&M. However, residents are frustrated and perceive that not enough is being done. According to the mail survey mosquitoes were described as a moderate to major problem by 61% of residents.

Recommendation 12: EMS Response and Fire Station Location

The City should pursue development of an additional fire station in the northeast portion of the City to maintain and improve EMS response to the area. The location should be on the west side of Highway 6 to ensure adequate response times. Discussions and surveys overwhelmingly support the placement of a new fire station on the corner of Tarrow and University Dr.; and the Citizen Planning Team has listed this as its preferred location for a new station. Residents would also like the use of the central fire station on Texas Ave. to be studied as an option if a new station cannot be built.



Mail survey response



Public meeting response

Recommendation 13: Street Lighting

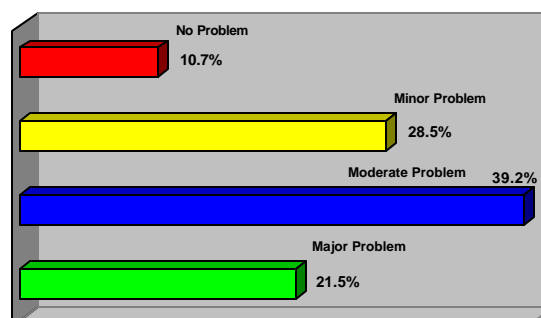
The City shall study the feasibility of installing new Street lighting where needed as described by residents. Residents identified several areas where there was concern about the current level of street lighting. The City will review these areas and consider installing new lighting where current standards are not being met. This should be coordinated with the installation of historic style street lighting described in Recommendation 17 on page 35.

Recommendation 14: Mosquito Abatement

Residents are encouraged to be responsible for standing water located on their property and apply local treatments (such as mosquito dunks) as appropriate. The City should regularly review the feasibility of more intense City-wide mosquito abatement methods. The City should also investigate developing a program to make mosquito dunks more available and affordable for residents combined with a more aggressive education campaign.

A majority of residents rated mosquitoes as a minor to moderate problem. Properties close to creeks and vacant properties have greater problems. The City does not do widespread spraying (fogging). The City, with help from local experts at TAMU, does monitor the mosquito population and will do treatments when a possible health threat is detected.

Mosquitoes in my neighborhood are:



NEIGHBORHOOD APPEARANCE AND CODE ENFORCEMENT

“Excessive parking in the streets, especially on both sides of the street with large trucks and SUV’s hinders access to our houses in case of health or fire problems.”

“Some houses look like junk yards. Make them clean it up or get out. Stiff penalties are our only recourse. Make them big fines and increase for each additional time.”

“A major concern I have is the restrictions placed on where one can park. This makes it very aggravating for guests to come over when they have to park clear down the street.”

-- Quotes taken from citizen survey --



Example of expanded gravel driveway



Historic style street lighting in Southside



Examples of on-street parking



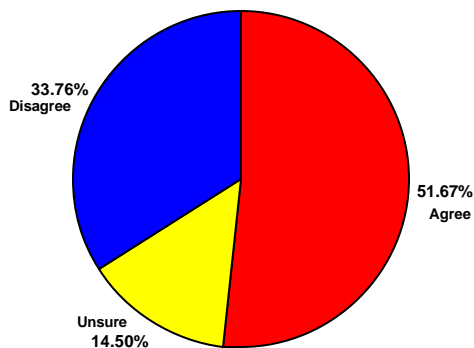
Summary

Protecting the character of the neighborhood was a key theme throughout this planning process. Recent increases in student housing and rental properties have had some negative impacts on residents. The issues include parking and code violations. There are also concerns about future changes to the neighborhood including infill housing development.

Recommendation 15: Limit On-street Parking

The City should formalize a process for residents to request a review of on-street parking safety and possible restriction of parking to one side of the street. Through a petition program, a majority of residents on a street could submit a petition to the City stating that there are safety concerns and request that parking be limited to one side of the street. The fire marshal will study the situation, determine if there is a significant safety issue and implement restricted parking. It is also recommended that the City consider developing an incentive program for property owners to increase the number of off-street parking spaces. At the public meeting 62% favored some type of regulation, but responses were mixed on what type of approach to use.

The City should limit on-street parking in residential areas:



No parking signs on Foster St.

Recommendation 16: Yard Paving

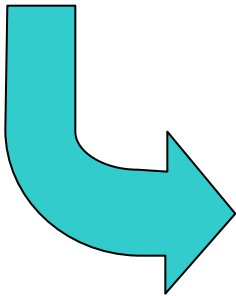


Example of a large parking area

Change codes to limit the amount of front yard that can be paved for parking. The City needs to amend development codes to limit the amount of a front yard that can be paved while also allowing adequate off-street parking.

Recommendation 17: Gateways

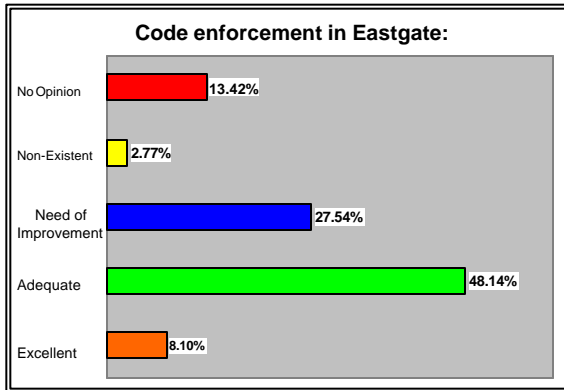
Neighborhood associations should develop plans for creating attractive neighborhood gateway projects. Funding from the City's Gateway Grant Program should be pursued. Most of the older neighborhoods do not have identifying entrance signs or gateways. Identification promotes community pride and can encourage other improvement projects. The City's Gateway Grant program was originally developed to help these older neighborhoods. The project needs to be initiated by the neighborhood associations. It is recommended that the area use the name Eastgate Neighborhood for identifying purposes instead of trying to create several different neighborhood areas.



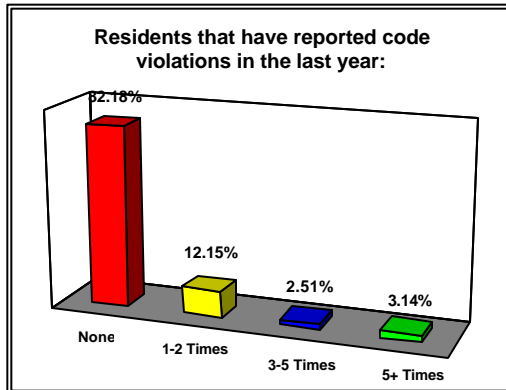
Recommendation 18: Improving Code Enforcement

The City should continue cross-training of city employees to recognize and report code violations. Currently all new employees receive training to report code violations. The City should continue to emphasize this practice for employees in the field.

In addition it is recommended that citizens be involved in a process to review codes used for property maintenance, standards of enforcement for all codes and methods available for citizens to reporting violations.



Mail survey response



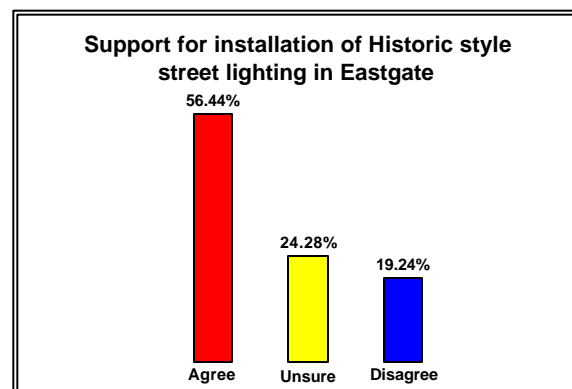
Mail survey response

Recommendation 19: Historic Style Street Lights

Install historic style street lighting in accordance with the plan developed by the Historic Preservation Committee. Public input was divided on this issue with 56% supporting the project in the mail survey and 54% supporting at the public meeting. The Citizen Planning Team recommends moving forward with the established plan focusing on the core area between Lincoln and Dominik first. **The following map shows the planned locations for historic lighting.**

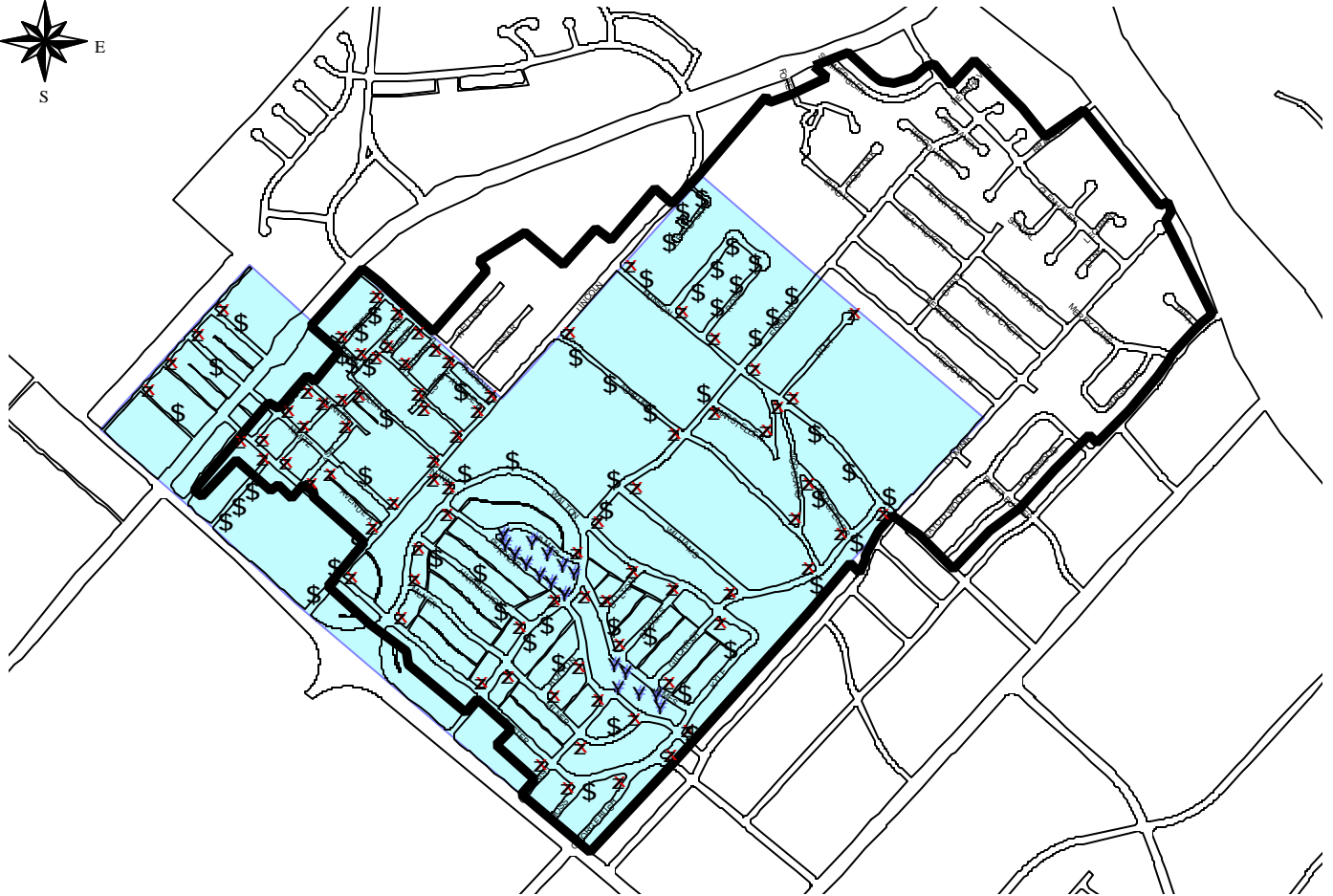


Historic style light in Southside area



Mail survey response

Eastgate Planning Project PROPOSED AND EXISTING STREET LIGHTS



Legend

- \$ Existing Street Lights
- x Proposed Antique Lights
- y Existing Antique Park Lights
- Eastgate Historic District

PEDESTRIAN SAFETY AND MOBILITY

“We have no sidewalks so the kids run through our yard or through the street which is not safe.”

“We need sidewalks and bikelanes.”

-- *Quotes taken from citizen survey* --



Sidewalks in need of maintenance



Nature trail behind College Hills Elementary



Example of sidewalk in Eastgate



Nature trail behind College Hills Elementary

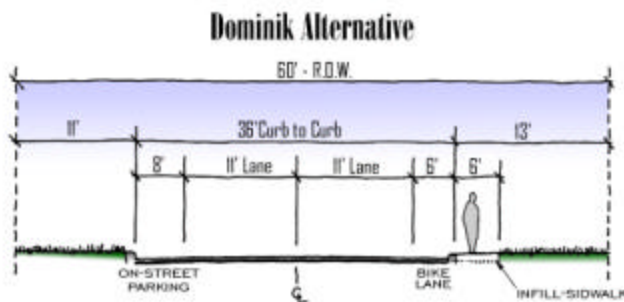
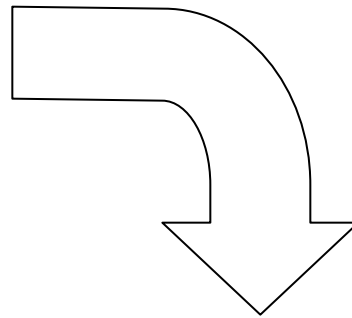
Summary

Safe pedestrian mobility is important to the future of the area. Access to current and future amenities in the area is needed. When the Eastgate area was developed, sidewalks were not required. The City has over time installed sidewalks on some collector streets, however most streets still do not have them. Sidewalks were rated as non-existent or in need of improvement by more than 60% of the respondents. Residents also listed many areas where sidewalk repair was needed.

Another issue was what to do with the nature trail that runs along the creek behind College Hills Elementary. Most of the trail is on school property, but has not been consistently maintained over the years.

Recommendation 20: Improvements to Dominik

Dominik Street is scheduled for rehabilitation next year. The City's Sidewalk Master Plan also shows that a sidewalk should be installed. The following design should be incorporated into the rehab project for Dominik. It is intended to provide safer pedestrian movement and discourage speeding. The design includes constructing a six-foot sidewalk, partially on the existing street and partially in existing right-of-way, and installing a bikelane on the north side of the street.



Recommendations 21: New Sidewalks on Major Streets

The City should construct new sidewalks on the following streets: Lincoln, Tarrow, George Bush East and Dominik. Lincoln and Tarrow streets are scheduled to receive CDBG funding for the installation of new sidewalks. However the section of Lincoln from Tarrow to Munson is not included in this project. A sidewalk is planned on George Bush East with the widening project currently under design. Dominik is scheduled for rehabilitation in 2002 and a sidewalk should be part of that project.



Recommendation 22: New Sidewalks on Residential Streets



Path showing where a sidewalk is needed

The City should facilitate sidewalk construction on these residential streets: Walton, Nunn and Kyle. These streets need to have sidewalks to complete important connections through the neighborhood. Residents on other streets are encouraged to submit requests where there is interest in having sidewalks. The City operates a sidewalk petition program for residents to submit requests to have sidewalks constructed on residential streets. The City may have to consider additional funding to fulfill resident requests.

Recommendation 23: Sidewalk Repair

Repair sidewalks in locations identified by residents. Residents listed several locations where sidewalks needed to be repaired. The City shall examine these locations and make repairs where necessary.

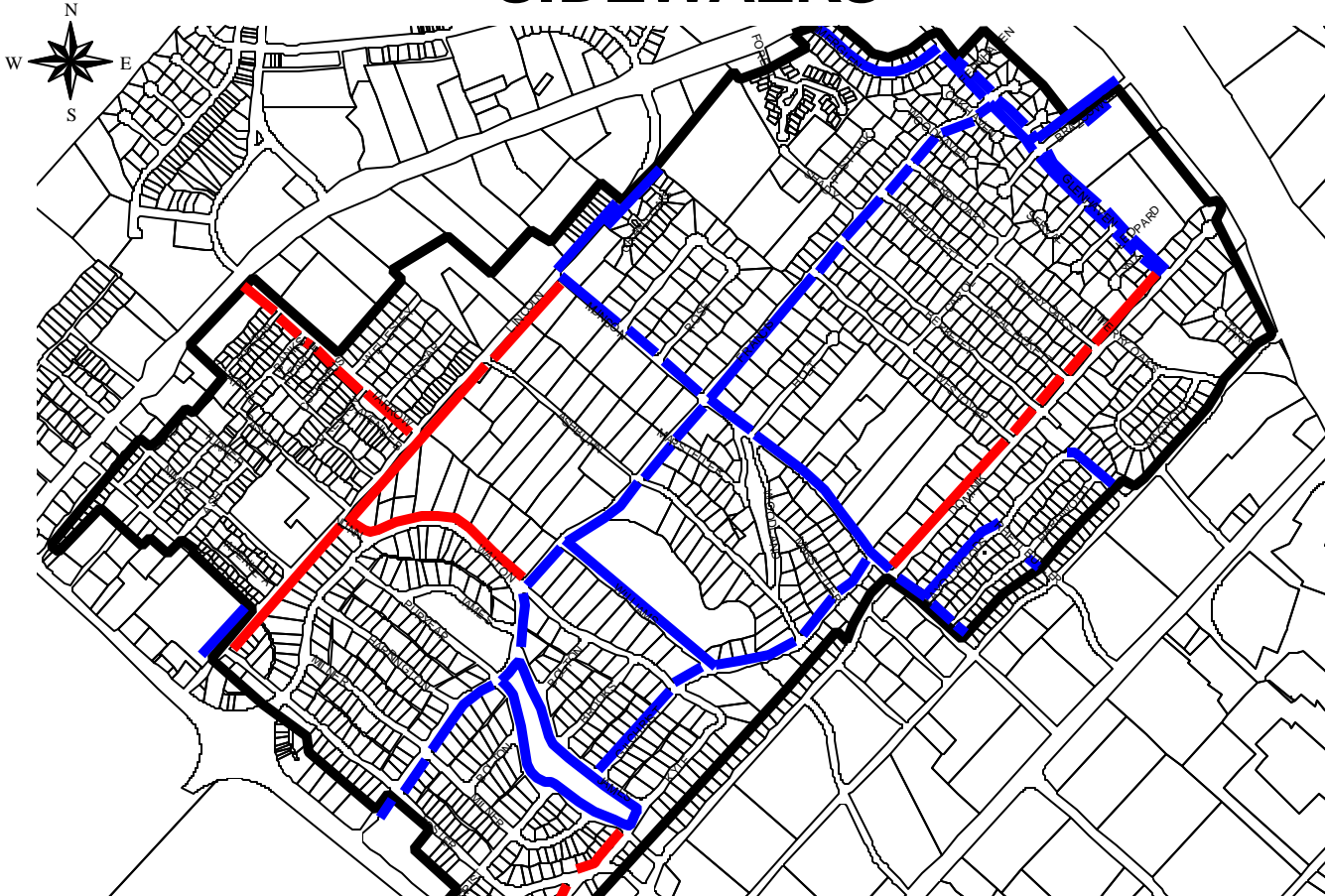
Recommendation 24: Nature Trail

Residents and neighborhood associations should work with CSISD to develop a plan for the nature trail. The nature trail has not been consistently maintained and is now in need of repairs. Because most of the trail is on school property, the school district needs to be involved in developing a plan for dealing with the nature trail.



Nature trail bridge in need of repair

Eastgate Planning Project PROPOSED AND EXISTING SIDEWALKS



LEGEND:

-  Proposed Sidewalk
-  Existing Sidewalk

TRAFFIC SAFETY AND MANAGEMENT

“Extensive traffic calming is needed throughout the entire Eastgate area.”

“Reducing speed limits will not reduce speeds. Law enforcement will!”

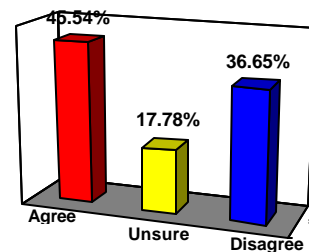
“Young drivers speed with impunity through child and pedestrian filled residential streets. I support additional motorcycle officers for life preserving traffic enforcement in heavily trafficked neighborhood areas.”

“Development has dumped excess traffic on Foster seemingly for the convenience of merchants.”

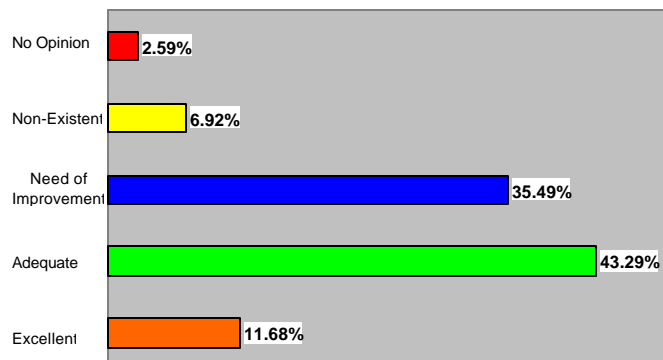
-- Quotes taken from citizen survey --



Traffic calming devices are needed in the neighborhood:



Speed control in Eastgate:



Summary

The Eastgate area has a recent history of traffic issues. Many residents agreed that something needs to be done, but were concerned about the process that would be used to design projects. Speeding was a concern for many residents in the area. While some suggested lowering the residential speed limits, it was decided that better enforcement of the existing limits was needed instead.

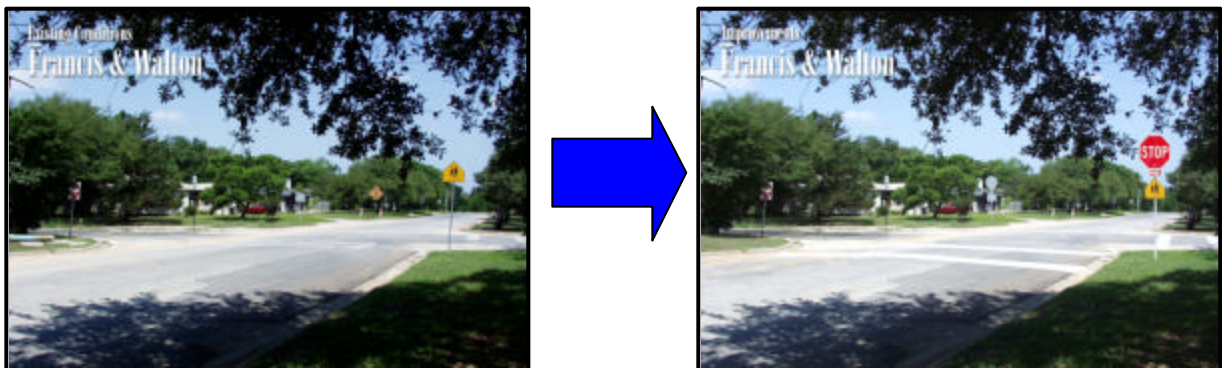
Recommendation 25: Reduce Speeding

KKAD25 Program and enforcement

Neighborhood associations should organize a KKAD25 program to promote speeding awareness and traffic safety. Keep Kids Alive Drive 25 is a national campaign aimed at reducing speeding and improving traffic safety in residential neighborhoods. In addition better targeted enforcement by police is needed to control speeding special attention should be given to enforcement in school zones.

Recommendation 26: Four-way Stop Signs

Four-way stop signs should be installed at the intersection of Francis and Walton. Residents have complained that this intersection is dangerous because traffic on Francis (collector street) has a stop sign while cross traffic on Walton (residential street) does not. This intersection is also in the school zone and traffic speeds on Walton are a concern.



Recommendation 27: Safety at Two-way Stops



“Crossing traffic” signs should be installed at potentially dangerous two-way stops including Foster at Francis and Gilchrist. At these intersections drivers do not always realize that it is a two-way stop and many incidents have occurred. They are known as dangerous intersections. The signs are intended to emphasize to motorists that crossing traffic does not stop at the intersection and that they should be cautious.

Recommendation 28: Traffic Management Study

The City should conduct a traffic management study of the whole Eastgate area. The emphasis should be on studying traffic patterns for the whole area and the benefits and impacts of various traffic calming options. Residents are concerned about the non-neighborhood traffic in the neighborhood as well as traffic speeds. Planned traffic changes, such as a future median on George Bush Drive will impact traffic patterns. There is concern that the current Neighborhood Traffic Calming program focuses on individual streets and will not adequately address the neighborhood as a whole. Instead, a study of the entire area needs to be done and acceptable measures found to reduce traffic problems.

- This study should look at ways to resolve problems associated with non-neighborhood traffic and speeding.
- This process should look at issues and impacts of the entire area instead of focusing on single streets.
- The goal should be to reach consensus among residents for acceptable solutions.

Recommendation 29: Sign Clutter

The City should review the necessity of all street signs and remove or combine signage where possible to reduce sign clutter. The combination of signs posted along streets in some areas is overwhelming. These signs are distracting to motorists and unattractive. The City needs to consider if some of the signs can be removed or combined to reduce the number of signs on the street.



Example of sign clutter on Munson Ave.

LAND USE AND HOUSING

“The Eastgate area has a fine elementary school, is extremely convenient to campus, to the middle school, to shopping and to Scott and White. These should be prime selling points for Eastgate as a FAMILY neighborhood.”

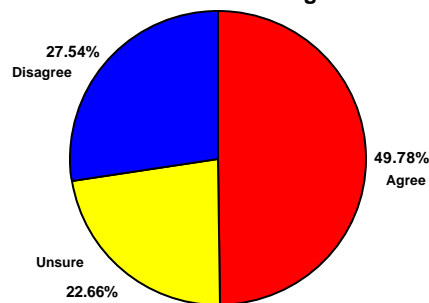
“If we could only do something about the students who don’t have enough maturity to care about our neighborhood we’d be OK.”

“Students are good neighbors and contribute to the security of the neighborhood.”

“My biggest concern is for the number of single family homes in the area which have become rental properties for students. It seems to me that any attempt to revitalize the area must address this problem.”

-- Quotes taken from citizen survey --

Regulations are needed to review and control the design and appearance of future houses in Eastgate:



Mail survey response

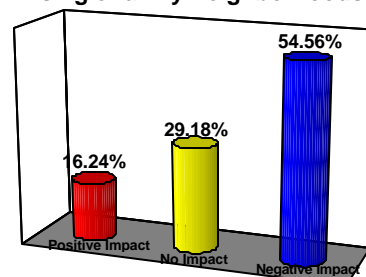


Historic home in Eastgate



Historic home in Eastgate

Impact of college students living in single-family neighborhoods:



Mail survey response

Summary

The Eastgate area enjoys a high demographic diversity and variety of housing types and styles. There is currently a shift taking place as some houses become rentals and others are occupied by an increasing number of younger families. Issues have been raised about these changes and the long term impacts on the neighborhood. Residents have expressed serious concerns about the impacts of increasing student housing and rental property. In addition they are weary about the impacts of future infill housing development on vacant lots and redevelopment of existing lots.

Recommendation 30: Accessory Apartments

The City should consider adopting an accessory apartment ordinance that would allow accessory apartments to be rented with specific controls. Current ordinances do not allow accessory apartments to be rented, except to family and servants. Allowing accessory apartments could benefit homeowners and provide alternative and lower impact housing for lower income residents and students. Below are some of the discussed advantages of accessory apartments:

- Provides an alternative and affordable housing option for many people.
- Provides a revenue source for the property owner that could make the primary house more affordable and/or provide more funds for proper maintenance of the property.
- Minimal impact on neighborhood character since restrictions can address issues such as size, location and parking. Units are also better maintained since owners live on-site.
- May increase the value of the property, which benefits the owner and increases tax base.
- Accessory apartments have fewer nuisance impacts since the owner also lives on-site.

An ordinance that would allow renting of accessory apartments should also require the following and special attention must be given to the enforceability of these regulations:

- Only one accessory apartment is allowed.
- Require an additional off-street parking space.
- Limit occupancy of the apartment to one person.
- Require that the homeowner occupy one of the structures.
- Regulate size of the apartment (currently 25% of the main structure).
- Adequate permitting procedures and enforcement mechanisms are necessary.

Recommendation 31: Student Housing and Rental Registration

Study student housing and rental regulation needs. The City should conduct a holistic study of student housing needs and impacts for the entire community, develop a policy concerning the provision of student housing in the community and implement a multi-faceted strategy to address the issues.

The student housing issue is very complex and impacts the entire community. Issues impacting the Eastgate area include:

- Increased on-street parking due to an increased number of drivers and inadequate off-street parking spaces. The on-street parking is seen as an impact because it could hamper EMS response and can be a general nuisance for residents pulling in and out of driveways.
- Increased noise violations. This includes parties, loud car stereos, barking dogs and general disrespect for others.
- Decreased property maintenance. In general, rented properties are not maintained to the same standard as owner occupied homes. Sometimes there are code violations including tall weeds and grass. However, sometimes properties meet code standards but generally look less maintained. The cumulative effect of multiple rental properties decreases the visual quality and potentially the value of the neighborhood.
- Minimal investment in properties. In general rental property does not receive the same type of investment as owner occupied homes. This includes remodeling, appliance and other interior upgrades and other improvements. In the long term, these houses do not increase in value the same and cumulatively can effect the value of the neighborhood.
- Increased nuisance violations. This includes litter, parking in yards, trash containers left out, junk in yards and general disrespect for neighbors.
- Students do not generally participate in community activities, attend neighborhood meetings or contribute to neighborhood improvement projects. The proliferation of students in a neighborhood reduces the resource base of the neighborhood association and its ability to function.

In general residents fear that an abundance of rental property will slow or minimize reinvestment in the neighborhood. Over the long term, this could prevent the neighborhood from increasing in value and possibly cause the area to devalue or deteriorate. Residents are also concerned about some community wide issues. Student housing competes with affordable housing opportunities in the community. There is also concern about the long-term traffic impacts as more students live farther away from campus.

The City should further study these issues related to student housing in single-family neighborhoods and develop strategies that will protect the long-term stability and quality of life in the area. Some ideas that should be studied include educating residents and property owners, insuring accountability for nuisances and property maintenance and the possibility of a rental registration program that would require rental properties to register with the City.

Recommendation 32: Neighborhood Conservation Standards

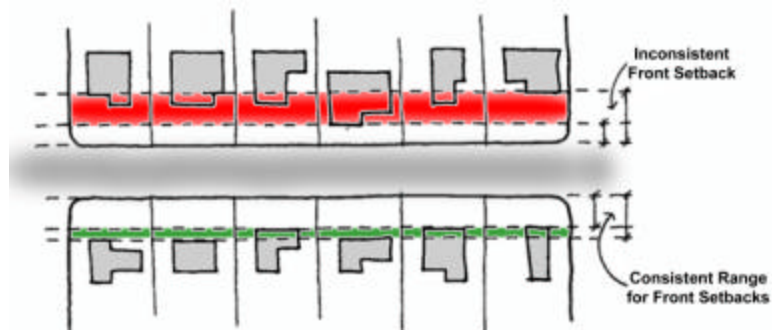
Residential protection standards should be developed to prevent negative impacts of infill housing. Conservation regulations are a zoning tool used to regulate infill development and preserve neighborhood character in communities across the country. This approach uses components of preservation and zoning in specific areas targeted for conservation. New construction and alterations must fit the character of the existing neighborhood. In this approach neighborhood character is maintained while still allowing development and redevelopment. Residential protection standards may be placed in the Unified Development Code or can be implemented through a Neighborhood Conservation District. Conservation codes have fewer and less intense regulations than traditional historic preservation districts.

The City's Historic Preservation Committee has also made recommendations regarding Neighborhood Conservation Districts for College Station. Some of the to be regulated may include:

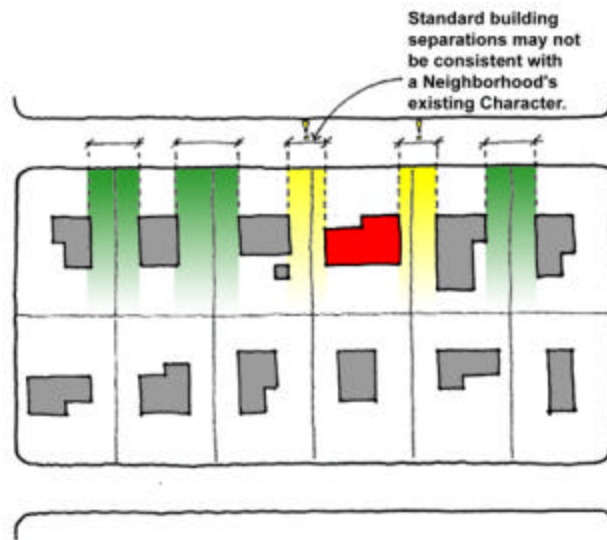
Limit the subdividing of existing lots.



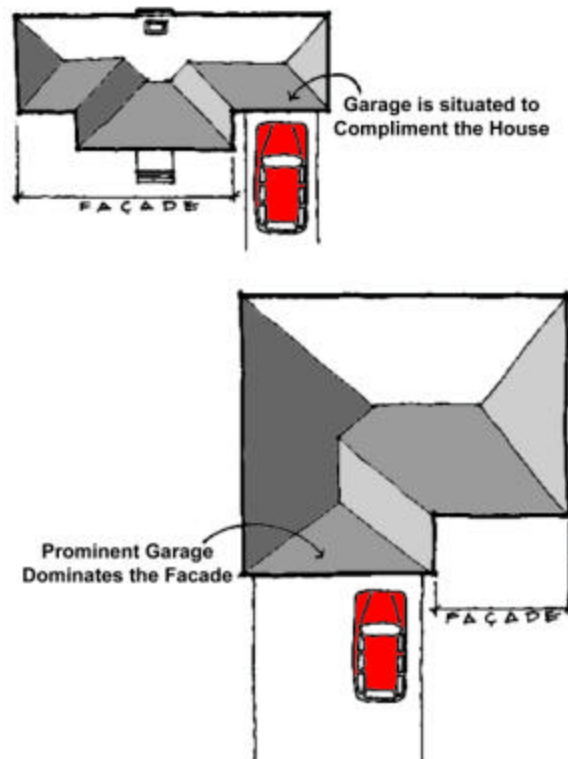
Limit the range of setbacks for new construction to be consistent with existing homes.



Limiting changes to existing building separations and side setbacks.

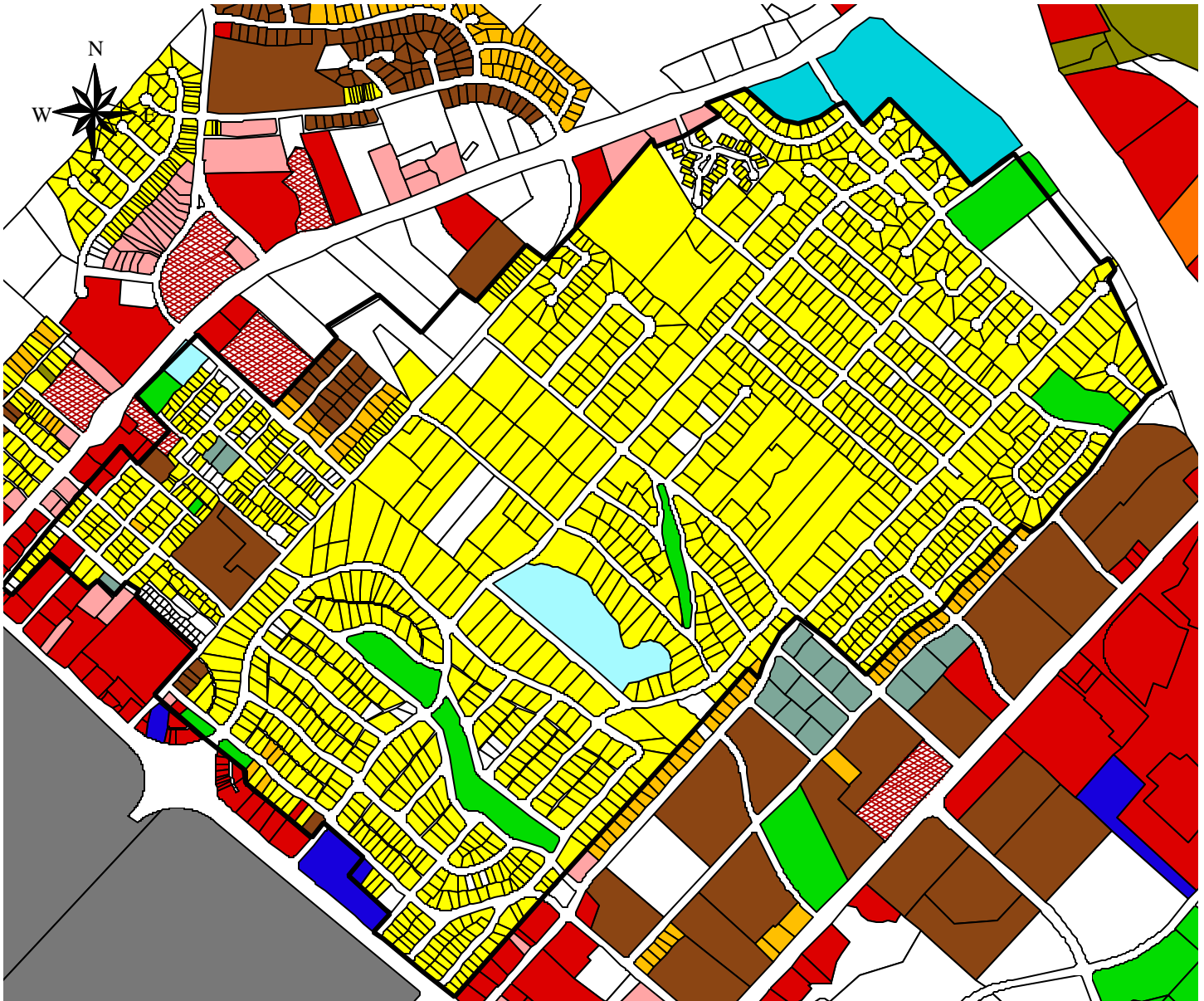


Regulate garage orientation to be consistent with existing neighborhood character.



Eastgate Planning Project

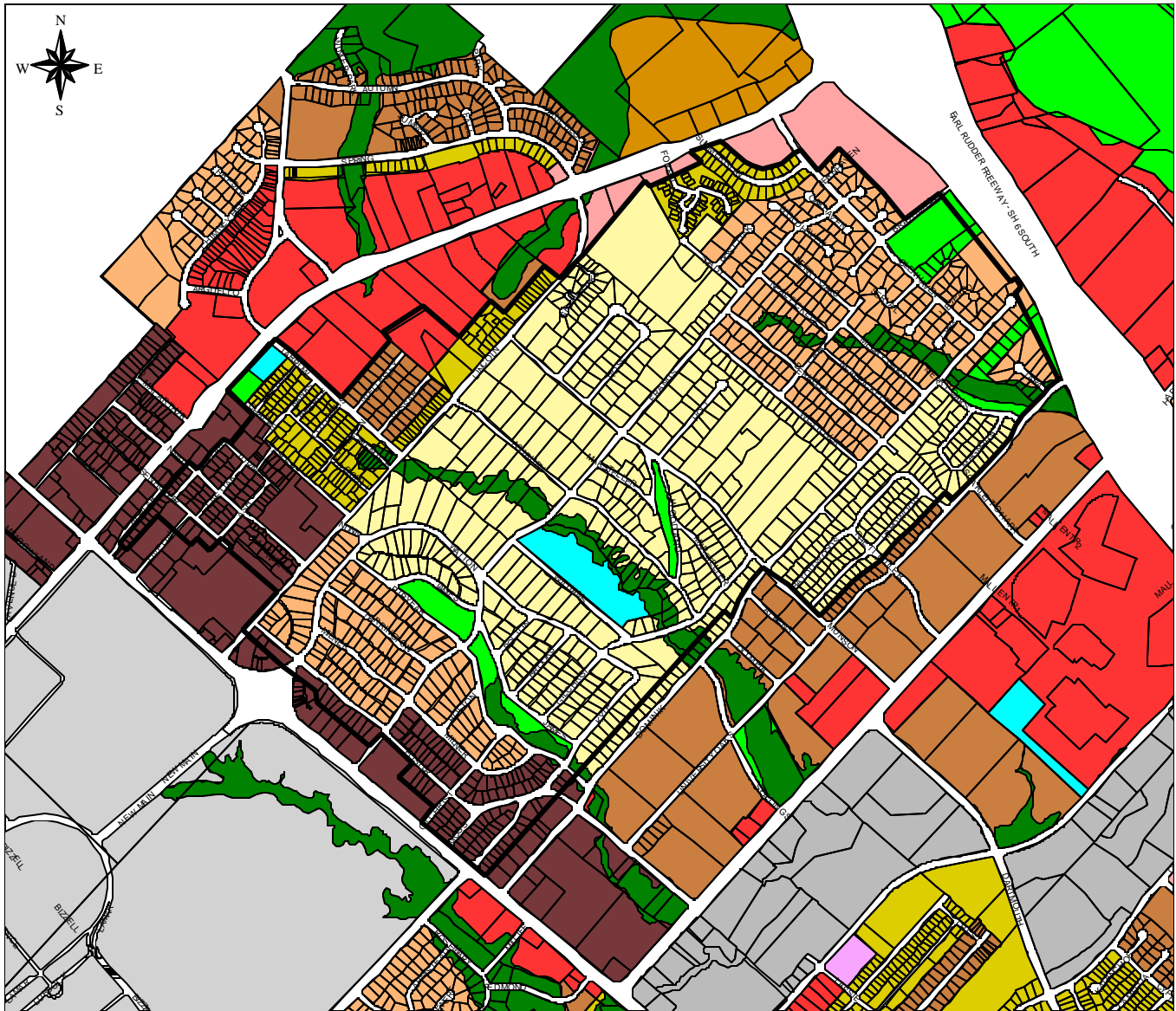
EXISTING LAND USE



LEGEND:

	Civic/Local Government		Other Government
	Commercial Amusement		Parkland, Greenways
	Duplex		Recreational Facilities
	General Retail		Religious and Fraternal Institution
	Hospital, Clinics		Rural
	Institutional		Schools
	Light Industrial		Single Family
	Mixed Use		State, Federal, Local Govt
	Mobile Homes		University
	Multi-family		Vacant
	Office		

Eastgate Planning Project COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



Legend

LU_SFRES_LOW
 LU_SFRES_MED
 LU_SFRES_HIGH
 LU_RESATTACH
 LU_RETAIL_NEIGH
 LU_RETAILREG
 LU_INSTITUTIONAL

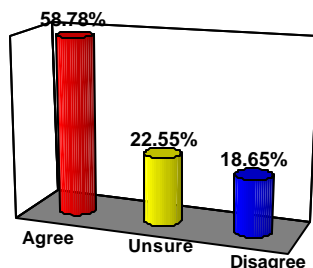
LU_OFFICE
 LU_MIXED
 LU_REDEVELOP
 LU_INDUSTRIAL_RD
 LU_PARK
 LU_FLOODPLAIN-STREAMS
 LU_TAMU
 LU_WPC_OVERLAYDISTRICT

NEIGHBORHOOD INVOLVEMENT AND AWARENESS

“There is no association in the immediate area. Too hard to start one, too many students in neighborhood and too many people moving in and out.”

-- Quotes taken from citizen survey --

Neighborhood Associations are needed in this area to keep residents informed of local events and organize helpful neighborhood projects:



Mail survey response

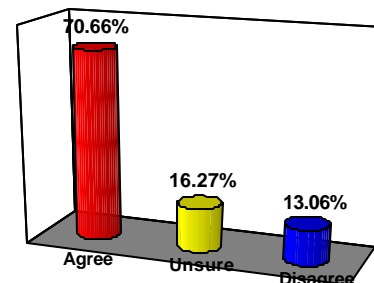


Citizens attend Eastgate Open House



Citizens attending first Eastgate meeting

Neighborhood Associations and residents are partially responsible for a neighborhood's quality of life:



Mail survey response

Summary

There are three organized neighborhood associations in the Eastgate area covering almost half of the area. Residents agree that neighborhood groups are important for increasing awareness, improving communication and solving problems. According to survey responses 69% of residents have never been to a neighborhood meeting and 68% do not receive a newsletter. Fifty seven percent stated the neighborhood associations were needed in the area and 69% agreed that neighborhood associations and residents are partially responsible for the quality of life in the area. One focus of discussion was on involving students in activities so that they feel like they are part of the neighborhood and aware of the issues.

Recommendation 33: Block Parties

Annual neighborhood “block parties” and events should be held to promote awareness & education of neighborhood issues and codes. One emphasis should be on involving students and renters. Plans are currently underway to organize an event in the fall with the TAMU Department of Student Life and various City departments.

Recommendation 34: Education

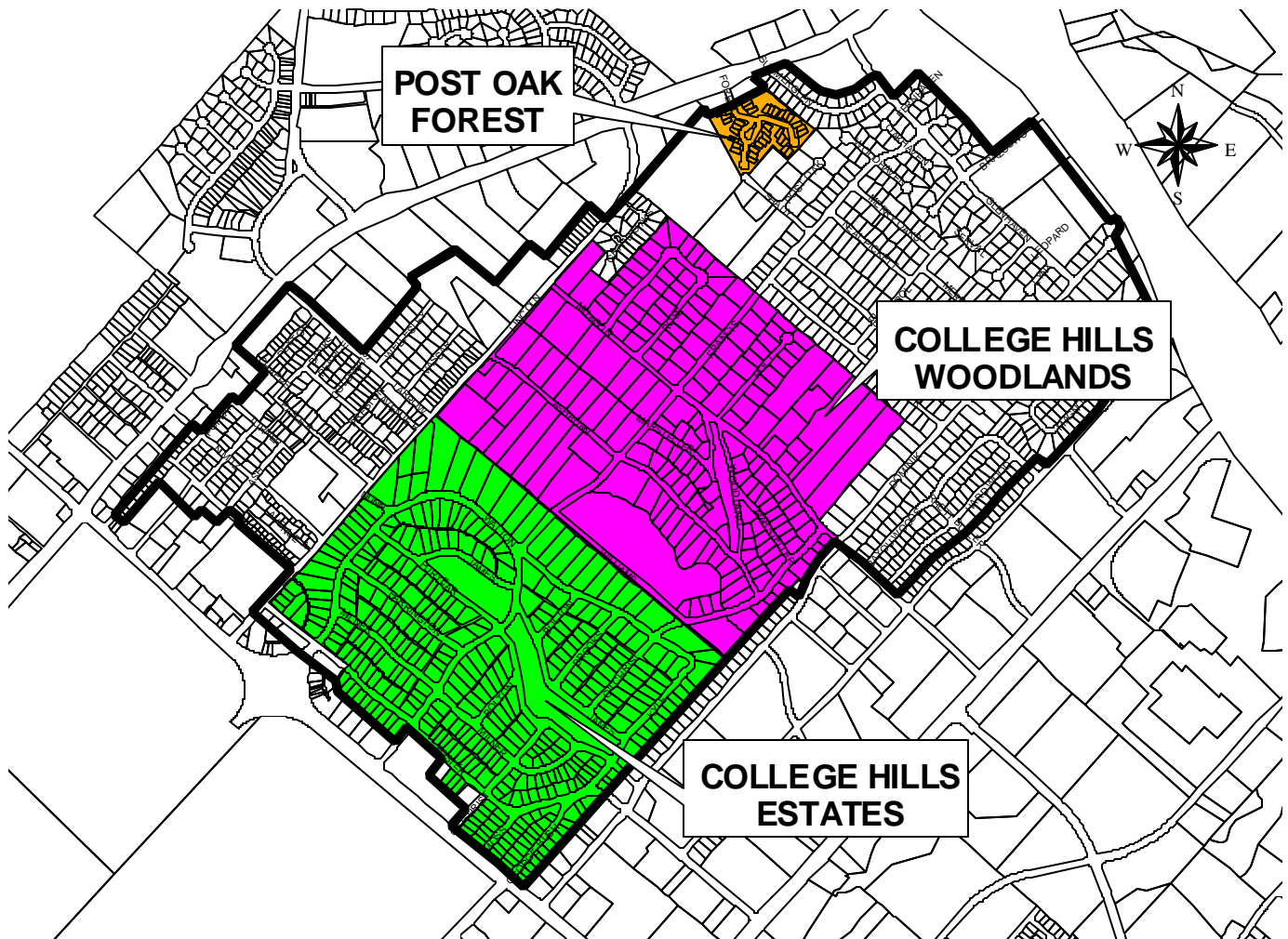
The City should develop an annual code/issues awareness theme for the September utility bill insert. A greater emphasis needs to be made on increasing awareness about neighborhood issues and code enforcement. Because September is when new students are settling in, each department contributing to the September newsletter should focus on information helpful to new students and residents. An emphasis should be placed on working with TAMU to get students involved and educated.

Recommendation 35: Form Neighborhood Associations

Residents should organize neighborhood associations in areas where they do not already exist. At least half of the Eastgate area does not have an organized neighborhood association. The City should work with residents to form associations where there is interest. It is also recommended that the entire Eastgate area organize as one umbrella organization that can work together to address issues and support neighborhood improvement projects.

The following map shows existing neighborhood associations in the Eastgate area.

Eastgate Planning Project EXISTING NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS



Chapter

V

IMPLEMENTATION



Implementing the Recommendations

The recommendations in this plan outline specific City projects or standards, which if executed, would implement goals of this plan and address resident's concerns. The recommendations also include specific projects, standards, or courses of action that other jurisdictions may be responsible for implementing. Implementation of these recommendations also supports the City's effort to implement the Comprehensive Plan goals and policies.

By adopting this plan, the City Council will demonstrate the City's commitment to implementing these recommendations. However, completion of projects, adoption of standards, or the implementation of these recommendations will depend on a number of factors such as citizen priorities, finances, staff availability, etc. The City should periodically review and prioritize these recommendations in view of current goals and obligations. These statements are intended to guide future City decision-makers. The listing of recommendations in the plan does not obligate the City to accomplish them. However, the neighborhood strongly urges the City to fund and implement these recommendations in coming years.

Each recommendation listed in this plan will require a separate and specific action by some organization in the community. The Action Chart identifies which groups are responsible for pursuing implementation of each recommendation. The implementer may be a City department or it may be a neighborhood association. City commissions and boards will use the plan as a guide in making future decisions that impact the area. City departments will consider these recommendations when developing future budget priorities. Major capital improvements may be required and may be prioritized in future Capital Improvement Programs. The Neighborhood Services staff will monitor implementation of these recommendations and provide update reports to the City Council.

The Action Chart that follows outlines the plan's recommendations, the responsible organization and a suggested timeframe for implementation.

EASTGATE NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

IMPLEMENTATION ACTION CHART

Improving Our Parks

	Recommendation	Responsible Organization	Implementation Timeline	Status
1	Carter Park Improvements	Parks Dept.	2003+	Unfunded
2	Playground shade structures	Parks Dept.	2003+	Unfunded
3	Improvements to Eastgate Park	Parks Dept.	2003+	Unfunded
4	Thomas Park jogging trail	Parks Dept.	2003+	Unfunded
5	Parking at Thomas Park	Parks Dept.	2003+	Unfunded
6	Thomas pool improvements	Parks Dept.	2002 – 03	Funded
7	Landscaping / maintenance	Parks Dept.	2002	Unfunded
8	Lions Park basketball court	Parks Dept.	2003+	Possible CDBG
9	Lions Park Expansion	Parks Dept.	2004+	Possible CDBG
10	Parkway Park boundaries	Parks Dept.	2003+	Unfunded
11	Park Benches	Parks Dept.	2003+	Unfunded

Public Health and Safety

	Recommendation	Responsible Organization	Implementation Timeline	Status
12	EMS Response	Fire Dept.	2004+	Unfunded
13	Street Lighting	Public Utilities.	2002	Funded
14	Mosquito Abatement	Public Works	2001	Ongoing

Neighborhood Appearance and Code Enforcement

	Recommendation	Responsible Organization	Implementation Timeline	Status
15	Limit on-street parking	Community Enhancement / Residents	2002+	Ongoing
16	Limit yard paving	Development Services	2002	UDO project
17	Gateway improvements	Neighborhood / Neighborhood Services	2003 – 04	Gateway Grant funds available
18	Improving Code Enforcement	Community Enhancement	2002	Strategic plan implementation
19	Historic Style street lighting	Public Utilities	2002	Funded

Pedestrian Safety and Mobility

	Recommendation	Responsible Organization	Implementation Timeline	Status
20	Improvements to Dominik	Public Works	2002	Partially funded
21	New sidewalks – collectors	Public Works	2002 – 03	Funded projects
22	New sidewalks – residential	Residents / Public Works	2003+	Unfunded
23	Sidewalk repair	Public Works	2002	Funded
24	Nature trail	Neighborhood	2003+	Discussions initiated

Traffic Safety and Management

	Recommendation	Responsible Organization	Implementation Timeline	Status
25	Speeding awareness / enforcement	Neighborhood / Police	2002 – 03	Not started
26	Four-way stop signs	Public Works	2002	Not started
27	Safety at two-way stops	Public Works	2001	Completed
28	Traffic Management Study	Public Works	2003+	Not started
29	Sign Clutter	Public Works	2002	Not started

Land Use and Housing

	Recommendation	Responsible Organization	Implementation Timeline	Status
30	Accessory Apartments	Development Services	2002	UDO project
31	Student Housing	Development Services	2002 – 03	Not started
32	Neighborhood Conservation	Development Services	2002	UDO project

Neighborhood Involvement and Awareness

	Recommendation	Responsible Organization	Implementation Timeline	Status
33	Block Party events	Neighborhood / Neighborhood Services	2001	Planned for Fall
34	Education and Awareness	City Depts.	2001+	Ongoing
35	Organize Neighborhood Assoc.	Residents / Neighborhood Services	2002	Not started